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SOCIO-RELIGIOUS, ECONOMIC

AND

LITERARY CONDITION OF BIHAR

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS, ECONOMIC AND LITERARY CONDITION OF BIHAR

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(From ca. 319 A.D. to 1000 A.D.)

BHAGWATI SHARAN VERMA, M.A., Ph.D. (Patna)

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FOREWORD

A deep and intimate study of the ancient Indian culture shows its rich and variegated patterns. Different historical and geographical regions, while maintaining the fundamental unity of Indian culture, exhibit certain characteristic development. The study of cultural heritage of the various regions of India helps us to have a fuller knowledge of the parts to appreciate the richness of the whole. This enables us to have a closer understanding and varying intensity of the forces at work in the different parts of the country in different periods. The justification of the study of regional histories lies mainly in serving as an aid to the understanding of the comprehensive history of the ancient land in all its fulness; in its achievements and failures through the ages. We see from close quarters the characteristic Indian spirit at play. We begin to appreciate these tiny and beautiful chips, which though scattered, go to form the culture-mozaic which India is.

Ancient Bihar has been one of the most dynamic historical regions in the past. The glorious history of the Barhadrathas, the Saisunagas, the Nandas, the Great Mauryas, the Imperial Guptas and the Early Palas radiated from this region. Notwithstanding the importance of political history, a closer appreciation of the life of the people in different periods of past history is an outstanding debt for the successive generations to repay.

Dr. Verma in his present volume has commendably attempted to portray the varied life of the people in ancient Bihar from ca. 319 to 1000 A.D. Being associated with him as his supervisor for his PH.D. thesis (the work is based on this), I have closely watched the work grow in his competent hands. He has very carefully and judiciously collected and classified the various bits of information scattered in ancient epigraphs and literary works, and has shown admirable skill in deducing important facts of everyday life from the coins and sculptures found in, or associated with, Bihar particularly.

The present work introduces Dr. Verma as a young scholar of great promise.

Patna University,
5th January, 1961.

B. P. SINHA

PREFACE

Bihar was constituted by the ancient kingdoms of Magadha, Mithilā, and Vajji-Samgha (North of the Ganges) which later on became a part of the kingdom of Magadha. From the time of Ajātaśatru upto the Guptas, North Bihar became known as Tīrabhukti, a division of the kingdom of Magadha.

This region of ancient Bihar had dominated the History of India from ca. 500 B.C., and the first historical attempt at empire-building embracing the entire Bhāratavarsha was made from Pāṭaliputra, the modern Patna, during the 4th century B.C. It was not only in the political field that Magadha dominated the scene for centuries, but in cultural, economic and religious fields also, Magadha made tremendous contributions. It was natural that, being a centre of great political activities of great emperors devoted to the religious, social and economic well-being of the people, Magadha was thought to be the radiating centre of these activities in different directions. Though much has been known about the political greatness and achievements of the Magadhan ruling dynasties like the Mauryas, the Guptas and the Pālas, a critical study of the life of the people of Magadha or of ancient Bihar during this period has not been so far systematically studied.

History is not simply a history of royal dynasties and administration. History must allot a very large canvas to the life of the people in a given period, for a proper evaluation of the achievements and failures of a particular age. And for this it is not only necessary to study the history of the Indian people as a whole to understand the common traditional aspirations which have guided them through their long history, but it is also equally desirable to study the life, activities and contributions of different regions which form distinct phases of a composite culture. No region should claim more attention in this direction than Bihar, so far as Ancient Indian History is concerned. With this idea in view the Socio-Religious, Economic and Literary life of the people of Bihar from the rise of the Guptas to the end of the reign of Mahipāla I has been attempted in this work.

Epigraphy, Numismatics, Art and Archæology, Literature and Foreign Travellers' accounts are the sources that have mainly been tapped for this purpose.

Available literary sources mostly corroborate the evidences derived mainly from contemporary epigraphic and archæological evidences directly concerned with the State of Bihar. In this connection we have sometimes drawn upon the works of Vātsyāyana, Kālidāsa, Bāṇabhaṭṭa etc. even though there is a controversy about the period and the place to which some of them belonged. Following the considered opinions of some distinguished authorities we have taken these authors to belong to the period under review. In Chap-

ter IV an attempt has been made to present an up-to-date position about the controversies regarding their date. Among the religious literatures, Brāhmanical works like the Purāṇas and the Dharmaśāstras and the Buddhist works like Vinaya-Piṭaka, etc., have sometimes been consulted, because they are mostly law books, and had general application, irrespective of the place where their authors might have lived and composed the works. The Hindus all over followed the rules of Dharmaśāstra, whereas the Buddhists guided themselves according to the rules of Vinaya-Piṭaka.

As regards the dates of these works, there is a lot of controversy which is not strictly relevant for our purpose. The Purāṇas written from the point of view of Magadha as the centre, were according to Pargiter, enlarged and re-edited during the period under review.[1] Jolly has determined the period of the Nārada-Smriti as not earlier than the fourth or fifth century A.D.[2], and of the Brihaspati-Smriti as not later than the sixth or seventh century A.D.[3]. In view of this, these two Smritis belong to the period under review and, therefore, they have been consulted. Besides the Nārada-Smriti, the Brihaspati-Smriti and a few other books on Dharmaśāstra which belong to this period, we have sometimes consulted Yājñavalkya- Manu- and Vishṇu-Smritis which though earlier in time, were also applicable in the Gupta period or even later. Marshall[4] has rightly pointed out that the code of Manu was observed by the people of the Gupta period.

So far as the Buddhist literature is concerned, we have sometimes utilised Vinaya-Piṭaka though much earlier in time. It was the book of the rules of discipline for the Buddhists who continued to observe them down to this period. Fa-Hien[5] has mentioned in his account that the Buddhist monks were guided by the rules of Vinaya-Piṭaka. This is also corroborated by I-Tsing,[6] who writes that "the prosperity of the religion continues ever, owing to nothing but (the fact that) the Vinaya (is being strictly carried out)." Besides Vinaya-Piṭaka, some of the Buddhist religious couplets known as "Bauddha Gāna O Dohā," though religious in nature incidentally throw significant light on the Socio-Religious, Economic and Literary conditions of the Pāla period also and, therefore, they have been utilised here.

Last but not the least, important are the accounts of the Chinese travellers who visited the country during the period under review. They have left very exhaustive accounts of what they saw here. Even though according to a few historians, some of the facts they have stated may not be accepted as absolutely correct, their accounts give a fairly detailed picture of that period. Since these travellers were all Buddhists, it may be that they did not pay due attention to things not connected with Buddhism; their accounts do not give

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[1] Infra, p. 160.
[2] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. xvi (Intro.).
[3] *ibid.*, p. 276.
[4] Marshall, *A Guide to Sanchi*, p. 19.
[5] Legge, pp. 89, 98.
[6] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 65.

much idea about non-Buddhistic institutions, and may also be biased because they were all orthodox Buddhists.

This book represents my Thesis approved for the degree of PH.D. at the University of Patna in 1958. It contains 36 photographs of images, some from the Museums and some from my personal collection. I am thankful to the authorities of the Patna and Nālandā Museums for permitting me to use the Photographs of their exhibits.

No amount of words can adequately convey my sense of gratitude to my respected teacher and guide, Prof. B. P. Sinha, M.A., PH.D. (London), at present the Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archæology, Patna University, but for whose constant guidance and encouragement the present work would not have come out in print. The late Dr. A. S. Altekar, with his valuable suggestions, was also a source of help and inspiration.

My thanks are also due to my friends and colleagues. Dr. U. Thakur, Lecturer in the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archæology, Sri Lala A. Narain, M.A., Research Fellow, K. P. J. Research Institute, Patna, and Sri P. N. Sahai, in particular, were a never-failing source of help in going through the proofs and in the preparation of the index. Further I am thankful to Sri S. R. Roy, M.A., K. P. J. Research Institute, Patna, and Sri R. Jha, for helping me in the preparation of this work.

I am deeply indebted to the Patna University authorities for the award of the Hathua Research Fellowship which enabled me to complete my research.

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125, Pataliputra Colony,
Patna.

B. S. VERMA

1st February, 1961.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.O.R.I.	Annals of the Bhandārkar Oriental Research Institute.
A.S.I.	Archæological Survey of India (Cunningham).
A.S.I. (N.I.S.)	Archæological Survey of India (New Imperial Series).
A.S.R.	Archæological Survey Report (Annual).
C.I.I.	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.
D.H.N.I.	Dynastic History of Northern India.
D.K.M.	Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha.
E.H.V.S.	Early Histcry of the Vaishṇava Sect.
E.I.	Epigraphia Indica.
G.O.S.	Gaekwad Oriental Series.
H.B.	History of Bengal.
H.I.I.A.	History of India and Indonesian Art.
H.N.-E.I.	History of North-Eastern India.
H.O.S.	Harvard Oriental Series.
I.A.	Indian Antiquary.
I.H.I.	Imperial History of India.
I.H.Q.	Indian Historical Quarterly.
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J.A.S.B. (N.S.)	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (New Series)
J.B.B.R.A.S.(N.S.)	Journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society (New Series).
J.B.O.R.S.	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
J.B.R.S.	Journal of the Bihar Research Society.
J.B.T.S.	Journal of the Buddhist Text Society.
J.D.L.	Journal of the Department of Letters.
J.N.S.I.	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
J.O.R.	Journal of the Oriental Researches.
J.R.A.S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.R.A.S. (N.S.)	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (New Series).
J.U.P.H.S.	Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.
K.A.	Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra.
K.P.J.R.I.	Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute.
Kum.	Kūmārasambhava.
Legge.	A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms by Legge, J.

Life.	The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang by Beal, S.
M.A.S.B.	Memoir of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
M.A.S.I.	Memoir of the Archæological Survey of India.
Māl.	Mālavikāgnimitra.
Mbh.	Mahābhārata.
Megh.	Meghadūta.
P.I.H.C.	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.
P.O.C.	Proceedings of the Oriental Conference.
P.T.S.	Pāli Text Society.
Raghu.	Raghuvaṁśam.
Records.	Buddhist Records of the Western World by Beal, S.
Ṛtu.	Ṛtusaṁhāra.
Rv.	Ṛg-veda.
Śāk.	Śākuntalam.
S.B.E.	Sacred Books of the East.
S.I.	Selected Inscriptions.
Vik.	Vikramorvasīya.
Watters.	On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India.

SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION

The following is the scheme of transliteration followed in this work :

आ	ā	छ्	chh
ई	ī	ट	ṭ
ऊ	ū	ठ	ṭh
ऋ	ri	ड	ḍ
ए	e	ढ़	ḍh
ऐ	ai	ण	ṇ
ओ	o	श	ś
औ	au	ष्	sh
ङ	ṅ	स्	s
ञ्	ñ	Anusvāra	ṁ
च्	ch	Visarga	ḥ

Common words and modern names are usually written without any diacritical marks.

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL CONDITION

THE SOCIETY in the period under review was based on the fundamental law formed long before. Varṇāśramadharma was the basis of social order and marriage was its most important institution. Education and culture were widely cultivated; and dress, ornaments, food habits and such other things constituted the important aspects of social life. We would, therefore, describe the social life of the people of Bihar in this period under the following heads : Caste system, Slavery, Marriages (including the position of women), Food and Drink, Dress and Ornaments, General Features of the Society, and Education.

CASTE SYSTEM

There are legendary references in our ancient literature to the origin of the caste system. Four orders of society are described in the celebrated Purushasūkta, as emanating from the sacrifice of the Primeval Being.[1] They are named—Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya, (which later on came to be known as Kshatriya), Vaiśya and Śūdra, and are said to have originated from the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet respectively of the Creator. The status of each of these four castes or Varṇas depended on the importance of the specific part of the body of the Primeval Being from which it was believed to have originated. It was actually the religious and metaphysical source of the status of the four important castes of society, which had evolved on the principles of the division of labour in the early Vedic society.

Brāhmaṇas (who have been described as originating from the mouth of the Creator) were assigned six duties, viz., studying, teaching, sacrificing, assisting others in sacrifice, giving alms and receiving gifts. Kshatriyas (who originated from the arms of the Creator) were assigned strength and the duties of studying, sacrifice, giving alms, using weapons, protecting treasure and life. Their aim was to maintain law and order and assist in good government. In the same way, the Vaiśyas (who originated from the thighs of the Creator) were allotted the power of work. Their duties involved studying, sacrificing, giving alms, cultivating, trading and tending cattle. The Śūdras (who originated from the feet of the Creator) were given the duty of serving the three higher Varṇas.[2] Apart from these four divisions, there are references to other lower castes such as Chaṇḍāla who sprang out of the mixed unions between the different Varṇas.[3] Kālidāsa's works[4] also mention the above noted divi-

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[1] *Rv.* Purushasūkta, x. 90. 12, quoted from Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. ii, pt. i, p. 33.

[2] *S.B.E.*, vol. xiv, p. 199; vol. vii, p. 12.

[3] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, p. 403.

[4] *Raghu.*, xviii. 12; v. 19; xiv. 67, pp. 183 and 156.

sions of society, which are again confirmed by the accounts of Yuan Chwang.[1] Yuan Chwang not only refers to the four Varṇas or classes of the society prevalent in his period, but also clearly describes the different duties associated with each Varṇa. Study, worship and making gifts were common to the three higher castes as distinguished from the Śūdras who were socially degraded.

The three upper classes were technically known as Dvijas[2] (or the twice-born), for the Upanayana Saṁskāra ceremony which they underwent was supposed to give them a second spiritual birth. Manu[3] (an early Smritikāra), laid special emphasis on the preservation of the caste system by the king. In his view the kingdom could prosper only so long as the purity of castes was maintained, or else, it would perish together with its inhabitants. This idea of our early Smritikāra was practised by the kings of the period under review. For instance, king Samudra Gupta has been described as "the supporter of the real truth of the scriptures" in his Allahabad Pillar Inscription,[4] which suggests that he enforced the purity of the caste, as prescribed by the Dharmaśāstra. This fact is quite in conformity with Kālidāṣa[5] who writes, "the king was the protector of the Varṇas and to him was entrusted the responsibility of looking after the proper and righteous conduct of his people." Dharmapāla's scrupulous regard for the rules of caste is mentioned in the Monghyr Copperplate of Devapāla.[6] That even a Buddhist king looked upon the Hindu social institutions like the Varṇāśramadharma as the *sine qua non* of social peace and progress is highly significant, and proves the national character of these institutions overlooking sectarian differences.

It is now necessary to examine the status of each of them in the society during the period under review. The Brāhmaṇas occupied the most honoured position and the rulers had much respect for them. The early Gupta rulers were Vaishṇavas and followers of Brāhmanism. They ruled over the country in accordance with the Dharmaśāstras which were purely Brāhmanical products. The Dharmaśāstras praise the Brāhmaṇas very much, and at many places the Brāhmaṇas are depicted as the representatives of God on earth. For example, Vishṇu[7] observes: "The Gods are invisible deities, the Brāhmaṇas are visible deities. The Brāhmaṇas sustain the world. It is by the favour of the Brāhmaṇas that the Gods reside in heaven; a speech uttered by the Brāhmaṇas (whether a curse or a benediction) never fails to come true. What the Brāhmaṇas pronounce, when highly pleased (as when they pronounce sons, cattle, wealth or some other boon to a man), the Gods will ratify; when the visible gods are pleased the invisible Gods are surely pleased as well."

The kings showed honours to the Brāhmaṇas. Some of the Gupta

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[1] Watters, i, p. 168.
[2] *Raghu.*, v. 23, p. 47.
[3] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxv, p. 415.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 11.
[5] *Raghu.*, iii. 27, p. 27.
[6] I.A., xxi, p. 256.
[7] *S.B.E.*, vol. vii, p. 77.

rulers had appointed learned Brāhmaṇas as their ministers. Karamdaṇḍā Inscription[1] belonging to the reign of Kumāra Gupta I contains the names of some Brāhmaṇa ministers of the Gupta kings. Even the Buddhist rulers, the Pālas, had appointed Brāhmaṇa ministers. Badal Pillar Inscription[2] mentions the names of Brāhmaṇa ministers of Pāla rulers. Some of the names of these ministers were Garga, Darbhapāṇi and Kedāramiśra.

Feeding the Brāhmaṇas was one of the acknowledged ways of gaining religious merit.[3] This was the main reason for the great respect that the Brāhmaṇas enjoyed during this period. The rulers, who were guided by the Dharmaśāstras, never failed to satisfy the Brāhmaṇas. Samudra Gupta gave away many hundreds of thousands of cows and crores of gold coins by way of gifts to Brāhmaṇas.[4] His son and successor, Chandra Gupta II, made at least two gifts, one in aid of a Brāhmanical institution and another for a charitable hall for the Brāhmaṇas.[5] The Karamdaṇḍā Inscription[6] also records the grants of land and Agrahāras to the Brāhmaṇas to help them in their life of learning and religion, and performance of expensive Vedic ceremonies like Agnihotra and Pañcha-Mahāyajñas. According to a much later tradition preserved in the Baidyanāthadhāma Temple,[7] the later Gupta King Ādityasena of Magadha performed horse sacrifices and Tulādāna and distributed the money among the Brāhmaṇas. This practice of making gifts to the Brāhmaṇas for gaining religious merit was not restricted to rulers only; it was practised by commoners as well. The Nandapur Copperplate Inscription[8] of the Gupta year 169, refers to the grant of land by a person to a Brāhmaṇa to perform the five great sacrifices. The Mangraon Stone Inscription[9] also bears testimony to such gifts to Brāhmaṇas.

The Pāla rulers though Buddhists made liberal grants to the Brāhmaṇas. For example, Dharmapāla granted land to them for the worship of the Brāhmanical gods.[10] The Monghyr Grant[11] of Devapāla was issued to record the grant of a village named Mesika to a Brāhmaṇa named Vīhekarātamiśra in the 33rd year of the King's reign. Vigrahapāla's father, Jayapāla, is said to have performed the funeral ceremony according to Hindu rites.[12] Umāpati, a learned Brāhmaṇa of Kañjivilvi, is said to have received the Mahādāna on that occasion. The fact is recorded in a commentary of the 'Chhandogapariśishṭa' named 'Pariśishṭa-Prakāśa' by Umāpati's grandson Narāyaṇa.[12] The high regard for the Brāhmaṇas of Pāṭaliputra is further reflected in the inscription

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[1] *E.I.*, x, p. 72.
[2] *ibid.*, ii, p. 160.
[3] *Collection of Smritis*, p. 423.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 28.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 38.
[6] *E.I.*, x, p. 72.
[7] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 213.
[8] *E.I.*, xxiii, p. 55.
[9] *ibid.*, xxvi, p. 246.
[10] *ibid.*, iv, p. 243.
[11] *ibid.*, xviii, p. 304.
[12] M.A.S.B., v, p. 58.

of a Rāshṭrakūṭa king[1] which describes the gift of a village named Tenna, in the vicinity of Kammanijja in the Lāṭa country, to a son of a domiciled Brāhmaṇa of Pāṭaliputra in the tenth century A.D. From the foregoing accounts, it is clear that the Brāhmaṇas were enjoying many privileges in society, and the high claims made by the Smritikāras in favour of the Brāhmaṇas were not generally challenged.

However, in the Pāla period, we learn from the songs of Sarahapā[2] that some Brāhmaṇas had become quacks in those days. Sarahapā ridicules them for their activities and beliefs. According to him they had forgotten the sacred lore of the Vedas, and yet they posed as if they knew everything about them. These Brāhmaṇas cheated the innocent people by different methods. Without knowing the hymns, they daily performed Homa sacrifices at their houses and got their eyes hurt with the smoke of the Homa. Sometimes they smeared their bodies with ashes and carried heavy weight of Jaṭā (matted hair) on their heads. They performed all the worship inside their houses, ringing the bell all the time, with a view to attracting people towards their action, so that they might offer Dāna or Dakshiṇā to them.

Even though little is mentioned in the records about the Kshatriyas as a separate caste, it can hardly be doubted that they occupied the next important place in society. While describing the four divisions of society, Yuan Chwang[3] writes "The second order is that of Kshatriyas, the race of the kings; this order has held sovereignty for many generations, and its aims are benevolence and mercy." Kālidāsa[4] says that a Kshatriya boy used to receive his lessons in archery. From these accounts we may conclude that they invariably made up the army and defended the country.

Next to Kshatriyas were Vaiśyas, who were never a homogeneous group even in the earlier ages, and the same was the case in this period. They were mostly found as agriculturists, cattle-rearers and merchants. Kālidāsa mentions the terms Sreshṭhī,[5] Vaṇija[6] and Sārthavāha[7] for Vaiśyas, trading exten-

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[1] I.A., xxxi, p. 395.
[2] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 3—

"Brahmaṇahi ma jāṇanta bheu,
Aaui paḍhiau chai beu.
Maṭṭi pāṇi kusa lai paḍhanta,
Garahi baisi aggi huṇanta,
Kajja varahai huavaha home,
Akki duhāvia kaḍue dhue.
Airiehin udalia chha ren,
Sisa su bahia e jada bheren,
Gharahi vaisī dīwā jālī,
Koṇahi vaisī ghanda chali.
Raṇḍi Muṇḍi aṇṇa vi vesa,
Dikkhijjai dukkhiṇa udderen."—SARAHAPA

[3] Watters, i, p. 168.
[4] *Vik.*, v, p. 246.
[5] *Śāk.*, vi, p. 121.
[6] *Māl.*, i, 17, p. 276.
[7] *Śāk.*, vi, pp. 121, 122.

sively by land and sea. Yuan Chwang[1] describes this class of the society as "traders, who barter commodities and pursue gain far and near." They were more conscious of their sub-groups rather than being members of the same Vaiśya caste. This Vaiśya community was famous for its charitable disposition. The hospitals in Pāṭaliputra where free relief was given to the needy and the sick were financed by the charity of this community.[2] The same was also true of many temples and monasteries and free feeding houses. The Vaiśyas were organised into guilds which were dominating the trade and industry of the country.[3]

The last division of the society was that of the Śūdras. According to ancient authorities,[4] it was the duty of the Śūdras to serve the higher castes, (namely the Brāhmaṇas, the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas) for their livelihood. Their services to the Brāhmaṇas—the highest caste on the social plane—was to bring them the greatest happiness. The Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas came next to the Brāhmaṇas. The status of the Śūdras was very low and they did not even enjoy the freedom of movement. Several restrictions were placed on them. For example, according to the Vishṇu-Smriti[5] the first three castes must not travel in the company of a Śūdra. Manu[6] says that a Śūdra must not acquire wealth because thereby he causes pain to the Brāhmaṇas.

Referring to the Chaṇḍālas Manu[7] writes: "The Chaṇḍālas should have their houses outside the villages, vessels used by them cannot be used by others (even after putting them in fire), their wealth consists of dogs and asses, their clothes should be the garments on corpses, they should take their food in broken vessels, their ornaments should be made of iron, they should incessantly roam, they are not to enter towns and villages at night, they have to carry the corpses of those who have no relatives, they are to be hangmen when the king so orders, they may take the clothes, ornaments and beds of persons that are to be hanged." While describing the kingdom of Madhyadeśa, Fa-Hien[8] has written that when the Chaṇḍālas entered the city they had to forewarn the caste Hindus of their approach by the sound of wooden sticks, so that they might not come in contact with them. References to the Chaṇḍālas living in Bihar are made invariably in the Copperplate Grants of the Pāla rulers.[9] They had their residence outside the town. This is evident from the songs of the Buddhist Siddha Kaṇhapā[10] who writes that the Domba, i.e., the Doms and Chaṇḍālas, had their houses outside the towns. This is a clear indication that they were regarded as untouchables.

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[1] Watters, i, p. 168.
[2] Legge, p. 79.
[3] Infra (Guild Organisation), p. 144.
[4] Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. ii, pt. i, p. 120.
[5] *S.B.E.*, vol. vii, p. 199.
[6] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, p. 430.
[7] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, pp. 414-15.
[8] Legge, p. 43.
[9] I.A., xxi, p. 257.
[10] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 150.

But there are instances which show that the rigorous rules for the Śūdras were not always stressed. They were allowed to perform the work of the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas in times of distress.[1] If a Śūdra was unable to maintain himself and his family by serving the Dvijas, he was allowed to maintain himself by having recourse to crafts like carpentry, drawing and painting.[2] This fact is also corroborated by Yuan Chwang[3] who has described them also as agriculturists.

It may be interesting to study the circumstances that led to the improvement of the social condition of the Śūdras. Buddhism, the rival religion, held out the promise of equality amongst people, irrespective of caste. It was in striking contrast to their existing status in Hindu religion in which they were looked down upon and were considered to be born inferior to the other castes. The Siddhas particularly worked among them. Thus the growing popularity of Buddhism among the Śūdras and the untouchables of the Hindu castes might have persuaded the Brāhmaṇas to adopt a more liberal policy and this made them to extend some economic and social concessions to the Śūdras.

As regards the marriage between the different castes, Yuan Chwang writes[4]: "The members of a caste marry within the caste, the great and the obscure keeping apart." This shows that the marriages were mostly performed within the same caste. However, we have many instances of inter-caste marriages, specially amongst the three higher castes. We find that Anuloma (i.e., marriage between a male of higher caste and a female of lower caste) was not unknown. Inscriptions belonging to the period describe such types of marriages. For instance, the marriage of Prabhāvatī Guptā (daughter of Chandra Gupta II, who was probably a Vaiśya king[5]) was solemnised with

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[1] Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. ii, pt. i, p. 120.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] Watters, i, p. 168.
[4] *ibid.*

[5] There is a controversy about the caste of the Gupta Kings. Jayaswal has mentioned them as Jāṭa from Mathurā (*History of India*, pp. 115-19). At another place he has again mentioned the Guptas as Karaskaras (*Modern Review*—Nov., 1929. p. 500). But on the basis of the termination 'Gupta' they are regarded as Vaiśya. For example *Vishṇu Purāṇa* (Book III, Chap. 10, ver. 9) says: "(The termination) Śarman is prescribed for a Brāhmaṇa; Varman belongs to Kshatriya, (and) a name characterised by 'Gupta' or 'Dāsa' is approved of in the case of (respectively) a Vaiśya and a Śūdra." So also in the *Mānavadharmaśāstra*, ii. 31 (Burnell's translation, p. 20), a rule of the same tendency is laid down, though without specifying any particular termination. On this authority it has been suggested that the early Guptas were not of high rank, being at the best of the Vaiśya caste, and that this is the reason why they felt such pride in their alliance with the Lichchhavis, as shown by the mention of the name of Kumāradevī and of her family on some of the gold coins of Chandra Gupta I, and of the epithet "daughter's son of Lichchhavis (or of a Lichchhavi King)" always applied to Samudra Gupta in the Genealogical passages. Dr. Altekar in his book, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, (1st ed., p. 89) has regarded the Gupta kings as Vaiśya. In any case we don't find the Gupta kings as Brāhmaṇas, but they married their daughters to a Brāhmaṇa family.

Rudraseṇa II (Vākātaka), an orthodox Brāhmaṇa[1]. The Mandasore Inscription[2] of Yaśodharman of Malwa mentions Brāhmaṇa Ravikriti as the husband of Bhānu Guptā (a Gupta princess). This sort of marriage was permitted by the Smritikāras as is evident from the Dharmaśāstra literature of the earlier period. Side by side, Pratiloma (i.e., marriage between a female of higher and a male of lower caste) was also in vogue during the period (although it was not approved by the Brāhmanical law). For instance, Chandra Gupta I had married a Lichchhavi princess, Kumāradevī, (belonging to a Kshatriya clan).[3] Similarly, Chandra Gupta II had married Kuberanāga, a Nāga princess of the Kshatriya clan.[4]

There are many instances of Pratiloma marriages among the rulers of the Pāla dynasty. There is a great controversy as regards the caste of the Pāla rulers. Some say that they were of a low caste,[5] while others state them as Kshatriyas.[6] Most probably, they were not Kshatriyas, but it is a fact that they performed marriages in the Rāshṭrakūṭa and the Haihaya families, who were probably Kshatriyas.[7] For example, Dharmapāla married Rannadevī,[8] daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa chief, Parabala. Surapāla I, married Lajjādevī, the daughter of the Haihaya king of Tripuri[9]. Rājyapāla married Bhāgyadevī, the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king, Tuṅga.[10]

These few instances of Anuloma and Pratiloma marriages in the society do not necessarily contradict Yuan Chwang's statement that the marriages were mostly performed in the same caste. It can be interpreted that the few instances of Anuloma and Pratiloma marriages cited above were rather exceptions to the general rule of marriages within caste.

The traditional scheme of occupations of the four castes, as laid down in the early literature, continued as usual. Keeping in view the changed status of some of these groups, certain modifications were introduced and some relaxations were made. For example, Gautama[11] (early Smritikāra) says that if a Brāhmaṇa cannot maintain himself by three means of livelihood, viz., teaching or officiating as a priest or by receiving gifts, he can then maintain himself by doing the work of a Kshatriya, i.e., by fighting and protecting people.

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[1] *E.I.*, xv, p. 39; Majumdar and Altekar, *A New History of the Indian People*, vol. iv, p. 96.

[2] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 156.

[3] Majumdar and Altekar, *A New History of the Indian People*, vol. iv, p. 128. In the *Mānavadharmaśāstra*, x. 22 (Burnell's trans., p. 302), where a Lichchhavi with others is defined as the offspring of degraded members of the Kshatriya caste.

[4] *ibid*, p. 40.

[5] *I.H.I.*, p. 72; Gopāla is mentioned here as low caste. Sinha is of opinion that the Pālas belong to a low caste or impure descent, *vide*, *The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha*, p. 328.

[6] I.H.Q., viii, p. 530; Tāranātha has stated them as Kshatriya.

[7] Altekar, *Rāshṭrakūṭa*, p. 17; Vaidya, *History of M.H. India*, I, p. 344.

[8] I.A., xxi, p. 255.

[9] I.A., xv, p. 305.

[10] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I, p. 131.

[11] *S.B.E.*, vol. ii, p. 212.

Even if this is not possible, he can follow the vocation of the Vaiśya in similar circumstances.[1] However, the Dvijas were nct to resort to the actions peculiar to the Śūdras,[2] but, according to the law-giver, they may do the work of a Śūdra when life itself was in danger. But in that case, they were not to mix with the members of the Śūdras by sitting on the same seat or eating food forbidden to the Brāhmaṇas. They were not to act as mere menial servants. This view of Gautama has also been supported by Nārada.[3] Thus, it is evident that, when forced by circumstances, the Brāhmaṇas did take to many of the occupations that were entirely forbidden to them in normal times.

That the occupation of the Kshatriya too was often usurped by other castes is abundantly clear from the accounts of some of the ruling families of this period. For example, both the Guptas and Vardhanas were perhaps Vaiśyas and were ruling the country and thus had adopted the occupation of a Kshatriya. The Pālas were also not definitely Kshatriyas. As already stated elsewhere, the Śūdras were allowed, in case of necessity, to engage in trade and agriculture which were regarded as the monopoly of the Vaiśyas. But in course of time it came to be regarded as a suitable occupation for all castes.

SLAVERY

It is difficult to ascertain with certainty, how slavery became prevalent in the society. But the presence of the word Dāsa, in the Rigveda indicates that slavery was prevalent in the Vedic period. Perhaps when the Aryans came, they conquered the non-Aryans and used them as slaves. A slave has also been referred to as an object of priestly gift.[4] There are references to slavery in early Buddhist literature. Vinaya Piṭaka[5] mentions three types of slaves : (i) those born in the master's house, (ii) those acquired by purchase, and (iii) those captured in war. Both the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya and the Dharmaśāstras have dealt with the institution of slavery at great length.

It seems strange how the foreign travellers failed to mention the institution of slavery in India, despite the fact that there were ample evidences about its existence in our contemporary inscriptions and literatures. Perhaps it was because of a much better status and condition of the slaves in India compared to those of the slaves in contemporary world that the foreigners were unable to detect the existence of the institution of slavery. Megasthenes (4th century B.C.) has not mentioned slavery as an institution during his period. The emperor Aśoka when proclaiming his Law of Piety enjoins in his Rock-Edict No. 9 that the Law of Piety consists of the kind treatment of slaves and hired servants. This wholesome principle appears to have been generally followed in the period under review.

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[1] *S.B.E.*, vol. ii, p. 214.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 213.
[3] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, pp. 55-56.
[4] R*v.*, viii. 19-36.
[5] Ed. by P.T.S., vol. iv, p. 224.

The slaves were called Dāsas in the Vedic period and this practice continued down to the period under review, as is evident from the Allahabad Pillar Inscription[1] of Samudra Gupta in which the word, Dāsa, is used though in a different sense. The Udayagiri Cave Inscription[2] of Chandra Gupta II informs us how Chandra Gupta, by virtue of his strength, had compelled many princes to become his slaves. These instances, though in themselves do not refer to the reduction of the conquered and subjugated kings to the status of slaves as we understand them, yet indirectly by metaphorical comparison prove the existence of slaves. During this period, the slaves had a better status in society. Manu[3] places a slave on the same level as one's son in the matter of corporal punishment. He writes, "the wife, the son, the slave, the menial servant, one's full brother, these when guilty of wrong-doing may be beaten with a rope or a thin piece of split bamboo." There were elaborate rules for the emancipation of slaves, which further made the foreigners fail to detect the existence of slavery.

Nārada[4] has distinguished the slaves from the workers (Karmakāras), although he has classed the slaves as well as the workers into one group 'Śuśrūshakas' meaning persons bound to obedience. He says that Śuśrūshakas are of five kinds: (i) a Vedic student, (ii) an Antevāsin (an apprentice who is learning a craft), (iii) an Adhikarmakrita (a supervisor over workmen), (iv) a Bhritaka, and (v) a Dāsa. The first four were called Karmakāras. They can be called upon to do only work that is pure, while a Dāsa may have to do impure work, such as cleaning the entrance to the house, filthy pits and roads and taking up and throwing away ordure and urine, doing bodily service to the master if he so desires. Nārada[5] has mentioned fifteen kinds of Dāsa (slaves) that existed during this period. They were the following :

(i) one born of a female slave in the master's house
(ii) one acquired by purchase
(iii) one received through gift
(iv) one acquired by inheritance
(v) one maintained during famine
(vi) one given on pledge
(vii) one released from a heavy debt
(viii) one taken captive in war
(ix) one won in a stake
(x) one who offered oneself for a slave
(xi) one who served for a specified term
(xii) one who served for maintenance
(xiii) one who accepted slavery out of desire for a female slave
(xiv) one self-sold, and

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 16.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 35.
[3] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxv, p. 306.
[4] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, pp. 131-32.
[5] *ibid.*, pp. 135-36.

(xv) one fallen from monastic life.

We have factual instances where people defeated in battles were made slaves. For example, we read in the Gauḍavāho[1] that Yaśovarma, while returning home after killing the Magadhan king, made the queens of the dead king ply the 'Chāmaras' over him as a token of their slavery. This gives an idea about the practice of slavery, specially among those persons who were captured in war. It is significant to note that Daṇḍadāsa, i.e., one enslaved by way of punishment mentioned both by Kauṭilya[2] and Manu,[3] is absent from the list of Nārada.

Slaves' rights to property were limited. Manu[4] lays down the remarkable dictum, repeated later on by Nārada,[5] that the wife, the son and the slave had no property of their own and whatever they earned belonged to their masters. Kātyāyana[6] said that the only wealth that the slave could call his own was the price he received for selling himself or what the master gave him as a gift. Thus their wages for services to their masters were not fixed, and what they received was decided by the will of their masters.

The period is significant for the easy law of emancipation of slaves. According to Nārada,[7] the first four kinds of slaves, such as born of a female slave, acquired by purchase, received through gift, and acquired by inheritance, were not to be freed except by the order of the master. Different conditions were laid down for the emancipation of other kinds of slaves. These conditions of emancipation were mostly based upon the reasons which had compelled one to become a slave. For example, one who turned a slave for being served in famine became free again by paying a pair of cows to his master. In a similar manner, slaves became free also by repayment of debts with interest, and by offering a substitute on the lapse of the specified period. One who saved one's master's life from grave peril, was declared free from servitude.[8] Nārada[8] further adds that in such cases, the slave should take a son's share of his master's wealth. Only an apostate from asceticism, one self-sold, and a person voluntarily selling himself into slavery were absolutely disqualified from release from servitude.[9] However, Nārada does not write about the emancipation of a female slave. But Kauṭilya[10] and Kātyāyana[11] both declare that if a master had sexual intercourse with a female slave and she gave birth to a child, both the slave and the child were to be given freedom by the master.

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[1] Pandit and Utgikar, *Gauḍavāho of Vākpati*, Intro., p. xliv.
[2] Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, p. 207.
[3] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxv, p. 326.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 138.
[6] *Kātyāyana*, v. 724.
[7] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, pp. 137-38.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 136.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 137.
[10] Shamasastry, *K.A.*, p. 207.
[11] *Kātyāyana,* v. 723.

Both Yājñavalkya[1] and Nārada[2] prescribed that a man could be a slave to a master only in the proper order of Varṇas[3], i.e., persons belonging to three Varṇas next to a Brāhmaṇa might be slaves to a Kshatriya, but a Kshatriya could not be the slave of a Vaiśya or a Śūdra, nor a Vaiśya of a Śūdra. There was one exception, viz., an apostate from asceticism could be the slave of a Vaiśya or a Śūdra king.

Nārada[4] has also described the procedure of emancipation of slaves. He writes, "When a master being pleased with a slave desires to make him a free man, he should take from the slave's shoulder, a jar full of water and break it, and should sprinkle water, mixed with whole grains of rice and flowers, on the slave's head and thrice uttering the words 'you are no longer a slave,' he should dismiss him with his (slave's) face to the east." As regards the status of the emancipated slave, Manu[5] says that a Śūdra, though emancipated by his master, is not released from servitude, whereas Nārada[6] is of opinion that when a slave is emancipated, his food may be eaten, his presents may be accepted and he may be respected by worthy persons.

The study of the institution of slavery in the period reveals the encouraging fact that the condition of slaves was still tolerable and a human approach was taken towards the slaves and the rules of emancipation were still liberal. The Nāradasmriti composed during the period is quite sympathetic to the slaves.

MARRIAGE

Marriage is an ancient institution which evolved in society to give it stability and order. The early Smritis[7] have mentioned eight forms of marriages prevalent in ancient days in India. The rules relating to marriage formulated in the early Smritis were continued during the period under review. For example, the eight forms of marriages, mentioned in the early Dharmaśāstra literature, are mentioned again by Nārada.[8] These various forms were :

(i) Brāhma, where the father gave away his daughter, decked with ornaments and jewels, to a learned man of good conduct invited by him.

(ii) Daiva, where the father gave away his daughter decked with ornaments, to a priest who duly officiated at the performance of a sacrifice.

(iii) Ārsha, where the father gave away his daughter after receiving from the bridegroom a cow and a bull or a pair of either.

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[1] *Yājñavalkya*, ii. 183, p. 334.

[2] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, pp. 137-38.

[3] Kauṭilya has mentioned that no Aryan can be reduced to slavery, except in certain conditions, for a temporary period.—Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra,* pp. 205-06.

[4] *S.B.E.*, vol xxxiii, pp. 137-38.

[5] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, p. 326.

[6] Quoted in *Parāśaramādhava*, p. 347.

[7] *S.B.E.*, vol. vii, p. 107.

[8] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 172.

(iv) Prājāpatya, where the father gave away his daughter after addressing the couple with the text, 'May both of you perform together your duties.'
(v) Āsura, where the bridegroom received the maiden after having given as much wealth as he could afford to the kinsmen and to the bride herself.
(vi) Gāndharva, or the voluntary union of a maiden and her lover.
(vii) Rākshasa, or the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home.
(viii) Paiśācha, where a man seduced a girl by getting her intoxicated or by other means.

Describing these forms, Nārada[1] says that the first four were the only approved forms of marriage, although he does support the Gāndharva one. He writes[2] that if a man had sexual intercourse with a maiden who was a consenting party, then there was no offence but he had to marry her and treat her with honour.

The condemnation of the last four forms proves that the basic idea of a proper marriage was that the father or the guardian of the girl should select the bridegroom on account of his merits and he was not to be influenced by any consideration of wealth or monetary gains.

Kālidāsa also writes about the various types of marriages. He describes the following four kinds of marriages : Svayamvara,[3] Gāndharva,[4] Prājāpatya[5] and Āsura.[6] According to him the Prājāpatya type was probably the most popular among them. The rest of the types as mentioned in Dharmaśāstras have also been mentioned by Vātsyāyana.[7] Vātsyāyana speaks of Brāhma as the best and regards the Gāndharva marriage to be most respected, as the latter is said to be attended with happiness, as it is the result of mutual desire.[8] This form of matrimony which took place by mutual consent without any form or ceremony was recognised by the ancient Hindus. It was termed Gāndharva because it was supposed that Gandharvas (the heavenly minstrels of Indra's court) were witnesses to such a marriage. Vātsyāyana says that love would start with the accidental meeting of the parties in a garden or a show. Sometimes these meetings used to be deliberately brought about by their friends or guardians, who were anxious to see them united in wedlock. Mutual exchange of gifts was a normal procedure and was very much in vogue among royal families. In 'Śākuntala,' Kālidāsa gives expression to this practice. As evident from Nārada,[9] the Gāndharva type of marriages had become very common among all the Varṇas of his period. The early Dharma-

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[1] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 174.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 179.
[3] *Raghu.*, v. 39, 64, 76, pp. 49, 52, 54.
[4] *Śāk.*, iii, p. 125.
[5] *Raghu.*, vii. 13, 28, pp. 69, 72.
[6] *ibid.*, xi. 38, p. 118.
[7] Gambler, *Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra*, pp. 205-09.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 209.
[9] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 174.

śāstra literature is silent on this topic. May be, it disapproved of the Gāndharva marriages, or perhaps because most of it was written when child marriages had come into vogue rendering love unions impossible.

The early Smriti-writers had advocated the settlement of marriages by the consent of the parents or the guardians. Thus the match could not be legal without parental consent, and that was why they unanimously disapproved of the last four forms (namely Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākshasa and Paiśācha). On the other hand, Vātsyāyana recommended the above unauthorised forms of marriages as well, although he also realised that a marriage must be legalised by the approval of the parents or guardians. To achieve this, he suggested,[1] "When the girl is gained over, and acts openly with the man as his wife, he should cause fire to be brought from the house of a Brāhmana and having spread the Kuśa grass upon the ground, should marry her according to the precepts of the religious law. After this he should inform his parents of the fact because it is the opinion of ancient authors that a marriage solemnly contracted in the presence of fire cannot afterwards be set aside." In this way Vātsyāyana, by giving a touch of religious rite and obtaining a formal permission of the parents to marriages of unapproved forms, gave them the status of the first four forms of marriages, namely Brāhma, Prājāpatya, Ārsha and Daiva.

A growing tendency to lower the marriageable age of girls is one of the characteristics of the period. Some texts make it compulsory for the guardian to marry the girl before puberty. It is during the 2nd century A.D., that the pre-puberty marriages became the order of the day. Yājñavalkya[2] (who wrote at about this time) insisted that girls should be married before the age of puberty, for otherwise every month their guardians will be guilty of the destruction of an embryo. Yama,[3] who wrote in about the sixth century A.D., stated that even if a suitable match was impossible, the girl before she came of age had to be married even to an unsuitable husband. Nārada[4] condemned a guardian to hell, if he did not marry his daughter before the time of puberty, and following the view of Yājñavalkya, he stated that the father or the guardian incurred the sin of destroying an embryo at each appearance of menses as long as the girl was unmarried.

On account of this change in popular beliefs and sentiments it came to be regarded that a girl must be married early and might be given away even to one who was devoid of qualities. Thus, when girls were married before puberty, naturally they had hardly any voice in the settlement of their marriages, and ultimately, only the parents were the sole authority to settle the marriages of their daughters. Harsha's sister Rājyaśrī was married only when she was about 13 years of age. On the other hand we find the heroines of most of the Sanskrit dramas, written during this period, are grown up,

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[1] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 205.
[2] Sharma, *Yājñavalkyasmriti*, i. 64, p. 28.
[3] Quoted from Altekar's *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, p. 40.
[4] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 170.

youthful women at the time of their marriages. For example, Śakuntalā was married when she had attained puberty.

In this period, caste system was well established in society. Marriages within the caste (Varṇa) were favoured and this was usually the prevailing custom. This fact is corroborated by Nārada[1] who said that the best course was to marry a girl of one's own caste. It is supported by Yuan Chwang[2] also who stated that in his period marriage within the same caste was preferred, although marriage between relations was prohibited. But as we have seen inter-caste marriages were quite popular among the ruling families, probably because of political reasons.

RE-MARRIAGE

Throughout ancient Indian history, re-marriages were permitted among the people under certain circumstances. The chief reason for permitting re-marriage (which gave rise to polygamy, widow-marriage etc.) seems to be the desire for the propagation of the race. Now we shall discuss briefly the conditions under which these re-marriages were sanctioned by society during this period.

When a woman's husband had been away for a long time, she could re-marry. Nārada[3] gave the following directions for the purpose: "If the husband has gone to a foreign country, a Brāhmaṇa wife should wait for eight years, and for four, if she has not given birth to a child; after that period, she may resort to another man." Similarly, he has laid down lesser number of years for the Kshatriya and the Vaiśya wives. However, no such definite period was prescribed for a Śūdra woman. If the husband was known to be living, then the period of waiting was doubled. Similar rules were also prevalent in the time of Kauṭilya.[4] Though the law was there and there must have been such cases of re-marriage, no example is known from the contemporary inscriptions.

Divorce :—Divorce was not normally permitted in society. According to the early Dharmaśāstras, marriage when completed by Homa and Saptapadī was indissoluble. The early law-giver Manu[5] said, "let mutual fidelity between husband and wife continue till death; this in brief may be understood to be the highest Dharma of husband and wife." In another place, he[6] declared, "Neither by sale nor by desertion is the wife released from the husband." The main view of these writers was that marriage was a Samskāra and the status of wifehood arose from that Samskāra, and therefore, even if the wife became Patitā, the Samskāra already performed was not annulled. Even if a wife committed adultery, she still remained a wife (after undergoing some

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[1] *S.B.E.*, xxxiii, p. 165.
[2] Watters, i, p. 168.
[3] *S.B.E.* vol. xxxiii, p. 185.
[4] Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, pp. 180-81.
[5] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxv, p. 345.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 335.

penances for the atonement of her lapse).[1] According to the Smriti-law, adultery ranked among the lesser sins which should be expiated by performances of appropriate penances. It was only in extreme cases, as when she committed adultery with a Śūdra or other low castes, or had conceived, or given birth to a child, or attempted to kill her husband, that she was to be abandoned altogether.

However, it is clear that in extreme cases, divorce could be had. A wife (according to Nārada)[2] could desert her husband and marry another if her husband was impotent or if he became a Sanyāsin or an outcaste.

POLYGAMY :—Re-marriages, which gave rise to polygamy, were not uncommon among the ordinary classes of people. Since a son was considered to be absolutely necessary for offering the prescribed oblations to ancestors, society, therefore, permitted a husband to take a second wife, if the first was barren. Manu[3] laid down the following rules for this : "A barren wife may be superseded in the eighth year; she whose children (all) die, in the tenth; she who leaves only a daughter, in the eleventh, but she who is quarrelsome, without delay." Nārada[4] also declared that women were created for procreating children. Vātsyāyana[5] went further and laid down that it was the duty of the wife to urge her husband to contract a second marriage, if she herself had failed to present a son to him. Except for getting a son, Nārada[6] was opposed to polygamy in society, as is evident from his writing, in which he recommended that the king should inflict heavy fines on a husband who abandoned a wife that was obedient, not harsh of tongue, vigilant in household work, chaste and endowed with sons. At another place he[7] wrote, "such a person is not fit even to become a witness in a court of law." Although polygamy amongst the masses—without justifiable reasons—was looked down upon by the Smritikāras, it was quite prevalent amongst the ruling classes. For example, Chandra Gupta II had at least two wives, Kuberanāga and Dhruvasvāminī. Kumāra Gupta I probably had two wives. Similarly, Dharmapāla performed two marriages. Perhaps, political reason was one of the justifications for a ruler for keeping more than one wife. Marriage into other royal families must have, no doubt, strengthened the position of a ruler.

WIDOW MARRIAGE :—Widow marriages were allowed in the early period. In such marriages preference was given to the younger brother of the deceased husband for procreation of children and there are numerous instances in the Vedic and Epic periods. Even Kauṭilya[8] in certain circumstances permitted widow marriages. But later on this began to be not only discouraged but definitely condemned by high class Hindu society. And the society during

[1] Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. ii, pt. i, p. 620.
[2] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 185.
[3] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, p. 342.
[4] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 169.
[5] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 221.
[6] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 184.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 87.
[8] Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, p. 174.

the period under review was practically severe on a widow on the question of her re-marriage. She was required to lead a life of strict celibacy and self-restraint,[1] and she could, under no circumstances, re-marry in the same manner as was prescribed for the maidens. Manu[2] went on to say that a widow should never even think of re-marriage. Nārada,[3] advised a girl's marriage only once, but elsewhere, however, he allowed a woman to re-marry if her husband had expired or entered a monastery, or gone out on a long journey. Parāśara[4] concurred with this view. The contradictory provisions in Nārada-smriti, according to Altekar,[5] "would show that though widow marriages were getting unpopular in the Brāhmaṇa community, they were still common among the other classes." On the authority of the 'Devī Chandraguptam' marriage of Chandra Gupta II with his elder brother's widow Dhruvasvāminī may be noted.

However, the existing social laws did permit a widow to undergo a sort of temporary marriage (called Niyoga), provided she had no issue.[6] According to this system, a widow could have a temporary union with her brother-in-law or a Sapiṇḍa of her husband, with a view to conceiving. But it was stressed[7] that the parties were not to meet again after conception had taken place. This concession might have been influenced by the idea that a woman's greatest purpose and fulfilment in life is to be a mother.

SATI :—As discussed before, the widows, as a rule, had to live a life of strict celibacy and self-restraint. Even the system of Niyoga began to be bitterly condemned (Manu[8] described this system as beastly). Therefore, it is not surprising that some of them preferred to die along with their husbands rather than face the prospects of a grim and difficult life. Thus originated the Satī custom, which does not appear to have been actually practised in the Vedic period. According to this system, the widow threw herself on her husband's funeral pyre, and thus ended her life. None of the Dharmaśāstras including the Manusmriti with the exception of the Vishṇu Smriti refers to Satī. The Vishṇudharmasūtra said,[9] "on her husband's death the widow should observe celibacy or should ascend the funeral pyre after him."

In the contemporary literature, we find some references to the Satī system. Vātsyāyana[10] pointed out how the clever dancing girls gained favour from their lovers by swearing that they would burn themselves on their funeral pyres. There is a reference to Satī (in seventh century A.D.) in 'Harsha-charita' of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, where it is mentioned that Yaśovatī, the wife of

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[1] *S.B.E.*, vol. vii, p. 111.
[2] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, p. 196.
[3] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 171.
[4] *Parāśara*, iv, 28.
[5] Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, p. 180.
[6] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 181.
[7] *ibid.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 181.
[8] *ibid.*, vol. xxv, p. 339.
[9] *ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 111.
[10] *Kāmasūtra*, vi. ii. 53.

Prabhākaravardhana, observed Satī, even before her dying husband breathed his last.[1] This custom was also commended by Kālidāsa.[2]

In actual life the Niyoga and the Satī systems were very rarely practised. We have many instances of the existence of widows in the society during the period under review. For example, we learn that Prabhāvatī Guptā, daughter of Chandra Gupta II, and Rājyaśrī, sister of Harsha, both lived as widows. The Bhitari Stone Pillar Inscription[3] also informs about the widowed mother of Skanda Gupta. There are many indirect references to widows in the works of Kālidāsa. The Smritis prescribe a vigorous code of conduct for a widow. The custom of tonsure[4] for widows was most ugly and unfortunate. Under this custom the widows had to get their hair (of the head) shaved, and according to Kālidāsa,[5] the widows were not permitted to participate in any auspicious work. They had to keep themselves aloof on such occasions.

CONCUBINES AND PROSTITUTES :—The rules of strict celibacy and self-restraint for widows brought about another result in society and that was the practice of concubinage or Avaruddha-strī about which we have references in the 'Kāmasūtra'. The idea of Satī was not acceptable to some widows, who probably had not the courage for it, nor had they sufficient strength of mind and character to live the high ascetic ideal prescribed for them. Therefore, they took to the life of Avaruddha-strī. Vātsyāyana[6] informs us that a widow, unable to lead a celibate life, lived with some rich person as his mistress.

Besides the Avaruddha-strī, prostitutes (Veśyās or Gaṇikās) were also existing in society.[7] From the Sanskrit drama 'Kaumudīmahotsava' belonging to the period and referring to Pāṭaliputra, we learn that the institution of prostitutes was prevalent in Bihar. 'Kaumudīmahotsava' refers to regular prostitute quarters in the city of Kusumapura.[8] These prostitutes were engaged in the study of Daṭṭaka-sūtra (some treatise relating to Kāmasūtra). Vātsyāyana[9] also states that the prostitutes were most accomplished and proficient in the sixty-four arts (Kalās). Nārada[10] laid down that, if a public woman, after getting her fee, refuses to receive the customers, she shall pay twice the amount of the fee; and the same fine shall be imposed on a man who does not pay stipulated fee, after having had intercourse with a Veśyā.

HOUSEHOLD DUTIES OF WOMEN :—As far as women's duties were concerned grown up and educated girls played an important part in the management

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[1] Cowell and Thomas, *The Harshacharita of Bāṇa*, p. 155.
[2] *Kum.*, iv. 33-34, p. 232.
[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 54.
[4] *Vedavyāsa*, i. 53.
[5] *Kum.*, vii. 6, p. 256.
[6] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 225.—We have no definite information whether besides widows, other ladies, due to poverty or any other reason, resorted to the practice of becoming mistresses of rich persons.
[7] Kauṭilya has also mentioned about prostitutes in his book *Arthaśāstra*. Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, p. 136.
[8] Rao-Sastri, *Kaumudīmahotsava*, p. 106 (introduction).
[9] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 49.
[10] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 143.

of their parents' households. The important duty of receiving guests and looking after their comforts was usually entrusted to them. This work solely depended on them when their parents were away from home. We find Śakuntalā[1] discharging such functions in her father's household before her marriage. As regards her duties towards her husband, the wife followed the rules prescribed for her in early Smriti-literature. She was to devote herself to her husband as though to a deity.[2] According to Vedavyāsa,[3] she attended festivities, social gatherings, sacrifices and religious processions only with her husband's permission. In the absence of the husband from home, she led a life of austerity and restraint, gave up wearing all ornaments excepting the marks of married state, and kept herself engaged in religious activities and fasts. A wife never went out to visit her relations except on occasions of calamities or festivities. In case the man had another wife, she looked upon the latter as a younger sister if she was older in age, and as a mother if herself was younger.[4] Kālidāsa[5] in his 'Śākuntala' summed up the Smriti-rules concerning the duties of a wife. These rules demanded, among other things, that she should serve her superiors well, and she should not turn against her husband even though angered by his faults. She was also expected to be considerate towards her attendants.

PURDA SYSTEM :—The lack of evidence makes it difficult to say how far the Purdā system was prevalent in Bihar. Yuan Chwang (who gives a picture of the Hindu society in the seventh century A.D.) nowhere refers to the Purdā system. On the contrary, he mentions that Rājyaśrī, the widowed sister of Harsha, used to come to her brother's court without a veil.[6] We even find references to women enjoying bath[7] in a river publicly which shows that there was no restriction to their appearing in public. Women were never prevented from going out on business. Not only did they attend the ceremonies like marriage[8] in the house of a neighbour or relation, but they even kept watch in certain cases over their sown field of rice and sugarcane.[9] Besides this, the sculptural representations of female figures of the period give absolutely no indication of the existence of the Purdā system.

However, it has been recorded in Kālidāsa's 'Śākuntala'[10] that sometimes women, specially married ones, did keep their faces veiled while out on a journey. But we have no reason to believe that the Purdā system ever became widespread.

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[1] *Śāk.*, i, p. 17.
[2] *Matsya Purāṇa*, 210. 18.
[3] *Vedavyāsa*, ii. 20-32, ii. 52.
[4] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, pp. 222-23.
[5] *Śāk.*, iv. p. 74.
[6] Watters, i, p. 345.
[7] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 193.
[8] *Raghu.*, vii. 16, p. 70.
[9] *ibid.*, iv. 20, p. 36.
[10] *Śāk.*, v. 13, p. 185.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink habits are some of the most conservative habits of man which continue to be the same throughout ages irrespective of political and social changes, but they certainly form an essential part of the life of the people. Literature and foreigners' accounts are the best sources which throw a flood of light on this aspect of man's life.

Vegetarian food seems to have been quite popular among the people. The cereals which were most commonly used were barley,[1] wheat[2] and rice.[3] Hiuen-Tsiang[4] has mentioned a special kind of rice known as Mahāsālī, which grew only in Magadha. This special kind of rice was called by the people "the rice for grandees."[5] While Hiuen-Tsiang was at Nālandā monastery, he used to receive, besides other things, a *ching* (peck) of Mahāsālī rice as his food.[6] Several other varieties of vegetarian food have been described in Kālidāsa's writings as well as in the Purāṇic literature. Amongst the vegetables that were commonly used were Kushmāṇḍa (gourd), Alābu (bottle-gourd), egg fruits (brinjals), Pālaka,[7] etc. Besides this, edible roots of plants were also used as food.[8]

Non-vegetarian food was, by no means, unpopular. In fact, Kālidāsa[9] has described meat as a common diet of the people in general. People usually went out for hunting and killed animals like deer and boars, and ate their meat. Meat was obtained not only from the hunted animals of the forests but also from slaughter-houses which were run for killing animals.[10] Kālidāsa has also referred to fish as a part of food. Specially the Rohitā or carp which was found in the vicinity of the Ganges.[11] The Purāṇic literature also supports the fact that meat-eating was very common among the people of the period. For example, the Agni Purāṇa[12] strictly prohibited a Vrati or observer of any religious ceremony from taking meat or wine during the period of performance. The restriction on meat-eating during religious observances naturally indicates that meat as part of food was common in those days. Otherwise there would have been no occasion for such restrictions. Besides, the reference to Ahimsā-Vrata[13] in the Matsya Purāṇa performed by the Hindus, which forbade meat-eating for a year, is a clear evidence to show that meat diet was prevalent among them.

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[1] *Raghu.*, ix. 43, p. 98.
[2] *Agni Purāṇa*, chap. 175, p. 670.
[3] *Raghu.*, xv. 78, p. 165; xvii. 53, p. 185.
[4] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 109.
[5] Watters, ii, p. 86.
[6] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 109.
[7] *Agni Purāṇa*, chap. 175, p. 670.
[8] *ibid.*
[9] *Śāk.*, ii, p. 28.
[10] *Māl.*, ii, p. 289.
[11] *Śāk.*, vi, p. 98.
[12] *Agni Purāṇa*, chap. 175, p. 670.
[13] *Matsya Purāṇa*, 101, 35, Dikshitar, *The Purāṇa Index*, vol. i, p. 141.

Fa-Hien[1], however, tells us a rather different story. According to him, the people of Madhyadeśa did not kill any living creature, nor ate onions or garlic. There were no butchers' shops. The only people (according to Fa-Hien), who indulged in these things were the Chaṇḍālas.[2] Thus his statement conflicts with the accounts of the Purāṇic literature as well as Kālidāsa's works. Of the two conflicting accounts, we are justified in considering the former's (the Chinese pilgrim's) statement as less reliable, because it does not even seem to agree with the accounts of later Buddhist travellers Yuan Chwang[3] and I-Tsing.[4] The former clearly says "Fish, mutton, venison are occasional dainties (slices). The flesh of oxen, asses, elephants, horses, pigs, dogs, foxes, wolves, lions, monkeys and apes is forbidden, and those who eat such food became pariahs." Perhaps the explanation for the inaccuracy of Fa-Hien's accounts lies in the fact that he was really only interested in the Buddhist monasteries, where vegetarian diet was usual. However, one may conclude that non-vegetarian food was by no means unpopular and the people at least occasionally took it.

Sweets and milk-preparations were also very common in those days. Among the sweets Modaka[5] was specially popular. In sculptural representation of Gaṇeśa,[6] Modaka is invariably shown. We have references to a special preparation of rice, known as Anna. It was prepared from rice stuffed with ghee and curds.[7]

Fruits were an important part of everyday food. Guests were entertained with fruits. Hiuen-Tsiang[8] while staying at Nālandā monastery used to receive each day among other things, Jamburas, areca-nut and nutmegs. The Chinese scholar also says that mangoes and plantains grew there in abundance.[9] Besides, there was a special Vrata known as Phala-Vrata.[10] On this occasion the food of the Vratī consisted entirely of fruits.

Drinking of wine was a popular custom amongst the people. Kauṭilya in his 'Arthaśāstra' has made references to the use and manufacture of wine.[11] There are also many references in the works of Kālidāsa and Vātsyāyana to intoxicating drinks. Both men and women were accustomed to drink.[12] In his works ('Raghuvaṁśa' and 'Mālvikāgnimitra') Kālidāsa[13] has mentioned that

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[1] Legge, p. 43.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 43.
[3] Watters, i, p. 178.
[4] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 58.
[5] *Agni Purāṇa*, chap. 179, p. 684 (on the Chaturthī Vrata, people generally made offerings of Modaka and flowers to gods).
[6] We find Gaṇeśa carrying Modaka in one of his hands.
[7] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 81.
[8] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 109.
[9] Watters, ii, p. 63.
[10] *Agni Purāṇa*, chap. 175, p. 670.
[11] Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, p. 131.
[12] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 58.
[13] *Raghu.*, iv. 42, p. 39; *Māl.*, iii, p. 303.

men, women and young maidens found great delight in wine drinking. Rich and poor were all habituated to it. It was a favourite with soldiers.[1] Yuan Chwang[2] also wrote that several types of wines were in use in the seventh century A.D. He says "There are distinctions in the use of their wines and other beverages. The wines from the vine and the sugarcane are the drink of the Kshatriyas; the Vaiśyas drink a strong distilled spirit; the Buddhist monks and the Brāhmins drink syrup of grapes and of sugarcane; the low mixed castes are without any distinguishing drink." It can be concluded from the foregoing accounts of Yuan Chwang that different types of wines were prepared for different classes of people. Drinking of wine was also common among the ruling class. In a rare coin of Chandra Gupta II, on the reverse, the king is represented as offering wine to the queen.[3] We also have literary evidences of the prevalence of wine drinking during the Pāla period. The songs of Buddhist Siddha Virūpā mention the sale of wine in shops. The shops were run by women who were known as Soḍini, i.e., female sellers of wine.[4]

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

Wearing of clothes and decking the body with ornaments (of wreath, of flowers or of more solid, durable materials like stiff metals, stones and shells), have remained enduring passions of human beings in all ages since man developed the taste for clothes and ornaments. But the designs of clothes and ornaments and the manner of wearing them have changed according to the needs and geographical environments of the society. Foreign contacts and anxiety or desire for newness and originality have together played some part in changing fashions of dress and ornaments. History reveals that just before the advent of the Gupta rule over Bihar, the Kushāṇas were ruling over North-western part of India, and Bihar most probably formed a part of their kingdom. Their contacts might have affected[5] the dresses of the members of the royal and noble families, although the dress

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[1] *Śāk.*, vi, p. 101; *Raghu.*, iv. 42, p. 39.

[2] Watters, i, p. 178.

[3] Altekar, *Guptakālin Mudrāyen*, p. 96, pl. ix, No. 6; Hornele is of opinion that the scene represents king offering wine to the queen, whereas Altekar does not agree with Hornele. The drinking of wine by both male and female is also depicted in a beautiful piece of Mithuna sculpture of the Kushāṇa period from Patna (at present preserved in the Patna Museum), where we find a male offering wine to a female. Patna Museum, Arch. No. 8178.

[4] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 138.

[5] There is nothing surprising at the adoption of the Scythian dress by the Gupta rulers. Numerous terra-cottas and stone-sculptures have been discovered in Kumrahar depicting Scythian conical cap and other characteristic costumes. The Muslim period saw the adoption of Hindu dress by muslims and vice versa. In the early 18th century, even some of the Europeans were found in non-European dress in Mughal Courts. Even in the modern period European dress has been adopted by a large section of educated and aristocratic people.

and ornaments of the masses might not have been as much affected. We find evidence of their influence on the dress of the Gupta rulers. On their coins, the Gupta rulers are depicted as dressed in conical head-dress, long coat, tight and tapering trousers or long breeches and high boots, which were purely foreign costumes. None the less, we also sometimes find Chandra Gupta II[1] clad in Dhotī and Chaddar which was purely Indian dress. In another type of his coins[2] he is depicted as wearing Kachchotā or Kasotā type of Dhotī, wherein the lower ends of the front pleats are tucked in at the navel, and are drawn up between the legs tucked at the back-centre. As now so in ancient times also, the Indians appear to have maintained much flexibility and variety in their dress.

As mentioned by Kālidāsa and supported by the sculptures of the period, the dress of men generally comprised of three pieces. They were Veśṭana[3] and two pieces of clothes (Dukūlayugman)[4] namely Uttarīya[5] (the upper garment) and Antarīya[6] (the lower garment). Veśṭana was a head-gear encircling the head and binding the locks of man.[7] But the sculptures that belong to this period do not depict the voluminous turban which is usually seen on the sculptures of the Kushāṇa period. Instead, we find a great variety of styles of hair-dressing both by males and females. The extreme loveliness of the various hair-styles may have contributed to the abandonment of Veśṭana by some section of people. It is also possible that artists in order to depict the excellence of coiffures did away with the head-gears.

The terra-cottas of male and female figurines (discovered at Kumrahar excavations[8]) as well as the Gupta coins have thrown much light on the different varieties of hair-dressing. The most common coiffure of women was a trefoil style with the hair arranged in two side-masses and a central top-knot. The male fashion took the form of twisted spiral curls arranged in parallel tiers and superimposed one above the other on the two sides almost reaching the shoulder. These spiral curls have been referred to in the works of Kālidāsa as Alaka or Alakāvalī (rows of frizzled locks), and have been described as accepted mark of beauty.

In Pāla sculptures, the male (almost invariably) and the female (though less frequently), have their heads covered with tapering conical Mukuṭas.

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[1] Allan, op. cit., pl. viii, Nos. 11-17.

[2] *ibid.*, pl. ix, Nos. 11-12.

[3] *Raghu.*, i. 42, p. 6.

[4] *ibid.*, vii. 18-19, p. 70.

[5] *ibid.*, xvi. 43, p. 173.

[6] This lower garment is called Veśṭana by Kālidāsa, (*Śāk.*, vii. 21) which is rendered Antarīya by Rāghavabhaṭṭa; cf. Ghurey, *Indian Costume*, p. 269.

[7] A fine representation of head-dress (Veśṭana) can be seen on the head of a male figure from Kumrahar and which is preserved in the Patna Museum, (Arch. No. 4438). Although it belonged to Kushāṇa period it can be assumed that this system of covering the head with Veśṭana would not have been very different in the Gupta period, though particular evidence is lacking.

[8] Report on Kumrahar Excavations, Plates xlvi-vii.

These head-gears are probably to be taken as signs of divinity and royalty and may not have been in general use in society.

Uttarīya, the upper garment, was the popular dress for the common people. Sometimes it served the purpose of a scarf or the Dupaṭṭā which was sometimes worn round the loins. For example, Kumāra Gupta I on some of his coins[1] has tastefully twisted his scarf high up above the navel at a rather unusual place and has formed a bow-knot at the left side, whose flapping ends harmonise with the lifting of the left leg. The usual way of wearing Uttarīya is generally shown in the images as crossing the chest and covering the left shoulder and the end of it falling on the waist of the images.

Antarīya, the lower garment, synonymous with the modern Dhotī, was a dress of men of status. Sometimes, Gupta kings[2] have on their coins been depicted as clad in Dhotī. From the early period upto the present day Dhotī has remained the usual dress as the lower garment. The sculptures of the period under review invariably represent Dhotī as the common lower garment for men. For example, the stucco figurines which have been attached to the niches of the main stupa at Nālandā mound, are shown clad in Dhotī.[3] From these stucco figurines, we can form an idea about the way of wearing Dhotī during the Gupta period. In these figurines we find that the Dhotī, which was pleated in the front, never extended below the calf and very often only just below the knees. At the waist it was uniformly held in position (sometimes just below and sometimes rather much below the navel) by means of a band or flat belt.

In Pāla sculptures, we find that a similar manner of wearing Dhotī was in vogue. But we find in these sculptures that the lower garment of a male as well as of a female is represented as being much more elaborately pleated in front, and held with a long girdle (Kamara-bandha), the end of which hung down in front of the garment between the legs. The belt is very often shown embroidered or otherwise ornamented and having a beautiful clap at the centre resting over the bunched front pleats. The other type of belt, which was flat, and had a neat bowknot at the centre, was in use, either by itself or in combination with the other belt.[4] The fashion of wearing Dhotī in a Kasotā type was also prevalent in this period. In a very beautiful standing bronze image of the Buddha (from Kurkihar)[5] accompanied by Brahmā and Indra, we find the last two (Brahmā and Indra) clad in Kachhotā or Kasotā type of Dhotī, suspended by waist-band.

The costumes of women were more or less the same as they are today. Kālidāsa has made references to three pieces of robes for females. They were the upper garment, lower garment and the bodice or jacket.

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[1] Allan, op. cit., pl. xv, No. 9.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] See Plates Nos. 11, 12, 15.

[4] We can have an idea of such belts from the Plates Nos. 13, 17, 19, 21, 25.

[5] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9591; See Plate No. 22.

The upper garment was a kind of scarf or Dupaṭṭā known as Uttarāsamga[1] and Stanottarīya[2], a garment covering the breasts. In sculptures, the style of wearing the upper garments by women is similar to that of men. We find the garment covering only part of the female body, as it comes diagonally from the left shoulder and reaches the right waist. Thus the right part of the chest and breast are shown bare. Sometimes it served the purpose of a veil for the ladies on festive occasions.[3] A few discoveries of female terracotta figurines at Kumrahar excavations depict the head of female figurines covered with a scaif.[4]

The lower garment was known as Antarīya.[5] Sometimes it was called either Vasana[6] or Nivasana.[7] Among the modern costumes of women, it can be compared with Sārī. In the Gupta period, Sārī was worn practically in the same fashion as it is worn today in Bihar. The Nāginī stucco figure[8] (from Rājgir, Maniārmaṭha) is shown clad in Sārī in a clearly Vikachha fashion, i.e., like a Lungī or petticoat. No portion of the Sārī is tucked behind. It is an old manner of wearing Sārī. The Didārganj image[9] from Patna (belonging to the Maurya period) is also clad in a Sārī of Vikachha fashion. However, the sculptures of the Pāla period depict the women as wearing the lower garment very much like the men; the ends of the garment of women were drawn in and tucked up behind just like those of men, an idea of which can be had from Plates 19 and 25,[10] in which we find a great similarity between the lower garments worn both by males and females.

In course of time, the manner of wearing the Sārī by women appears to have undergone a radical change. In a rare image of Varāha-avatāra[11] from Rājgir (preserved in the Patna Museum), we find the Goddess Earth wearing a Sārī which goes round the waist like a petticoat, and one of its ends covers the upper portion of the body and ultimately the head of the Goddess also before it falls on the shoulder. This is rather a unique specimen, because no other known sculpture shows this rather unusual manner of wearing the garment which is so strikingly similar to the modern style.[12]

Literature of this period more often refers to cut and sewn garment covering the female bosom. It may be compared with the modern Cholī

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[1] *Kum.*, v. 16, p. 237.
[2] *Raghu.*, xvi. 17, 43, pp. 170, 173.
[3] *Māl.* v. before verse 19, p. 356; *Śāk.*, v. 13, p. 85.
[4] Report on Kumrahar Excavations, plate xlix, No. 6.
[5] Supra, p. 23.
[6] *Śāk.*, vii. 21, p. 140.
[7] *Raghu.*, xix. 41, p. 199.
[8] Coomarswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, pl. xlvii, p. 176.
[9] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 134; See plate No. 1.
[10] In these images the female attendants are shown wearing lower garment similar to Dhotī.
[11] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 8428; See Plate No. 24.
[12] We find a similar representation on a terra-cotta plaque of a female figurine clad in sārī, belonging to Kushāṇa period. Patna Museum, Arch. No. 6782.

(jacket or bodice). Kālidāsa has referred to it as Kurpāsaka[1] or Stanamsuka[2] which indicates that it was meant to cover the breasts. In sculptures it is depicted in such a manner as only covering the breasts.[3]

Kālidāsa, in his works, has made several references to cotton, silk and woollen textiles, which were of different colours. These textiles, out of which the costumes (of male and female) were made, were both plain and printed. Generally, the striped clothes were favoured. The sculptures represent mostly striped clothes[4] and occasionally printed and embroidered in different patterns of floral design.[5] The sculptures also depict the clothes of fine quality. Fine clothes were so thin or transparent that sometimes it becomes difficult to decide whether certain images, which generally look nude, were clad in clothes or not. There is a controversy among the scholars[6] on this subject of nudeness. Sivaramamurty[7] writes, ".....it requires to see more carefully to understand that they were really well-draped, only the material of the drapery was very delicate and diaphanous." Whatever may be the fact, it is quite clear from some of the sculptures, that they are really shown in a state of semi-nakedness. Specially the busts (of females) are generally depicted uncovered. In the opinion of Basham, the Indian women in ancient period generally kept their breasts bare, and though there are numerous references to bodices in literature and women with covered breasts do sometimes appear in painting and sculpture, "the use of bodices may have been rather due to climate than to modesty." The learned scholar concludes that "their (Indian women's) ideas of propriety in dress were very different from those of their descendants."[8] But we are disposed to agree with the words of Altekar[9] that breasts are the most significant symbol of motherhood, and the artists ..... probably felt that they may be shown uncovered in works of art, though they may be normally concealed in actual life under a bodice or a portion of the Sārī. This convention facilitated the task of fully exhibiting the beauty of the female form without suggesting any indecency. It also gave the artists an opportunity to show the different beautiful ornaments worn on the chest and the shoulders." Therefore, the nudeness of the sculptures as pointed out by Ferguson does not necessarily mean that the ladies of the period kept their breasts uncovered in public.

For the monks, Yuan Chwang[10] has mentioned three kinds of robes. They were Antaravāsaka, Sanghātī and the Uttarāsanga. Antaravāsaka was a

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[1] *Ritu.*, iv. 17; v. 8, pp. 388 and 390.
[2] *ibid.*, iv. 5, p. 392; *Vik.*, iv. 17; v. 12, pp. 219 and 248.
[3] See Plates 19 and 23.
[4] Plates 1, 3, 17 etc.
[5] Plates 19, 20, 23 etc.
[6] Ferguson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*. pp. 102-03 (according to him until the Muslim conquest, Hindu women exposed their breasts in public without the least shame).
[7] M.A.S.I., No. 73, p. 54.
[8] Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, pp. 211-12.
[9] Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, p. 345.
[10] Watters, i, pp. 150-51.

lower garment, and Sanghāṭī and Uttarāsanga were the upper garments. The two upper garments differed in this, whereas the Sanghāṭī covered the whole body up to the ankles, the Uttarāsanga was worn diagonally like a Chaddar and it covered the body only up to waist.[1] Besides these garments, he has further referred to Nivāsana,[2] a kind of lower garment used on ceremonious occasions. The peculiarity of this garment was that it distinguished the monks of different schools of Buddhism. Referring to it I-Tsing[3] writes, "The distinction of the four Nikāyas (schools) is shown by the difference of wearing the Nivāsana (i.e., under-garment). The Mūlasarvāstivādanikāya pulls up the skirt on both sides (draws the ends through the girdle and suspends them over it), whereas the Mahāsaṅghikanikāya takes the right skirt to the left side and presses it tight (under the girdle) so as not to let it loose; the custom of wearing the under-garment of the Mahāsaṅghikanikāya is similar to that of Indian women. The rules (of putting on the under-garment) of the Sthaviranikāya and of the Sammitinikāya are identical with those of the Mahāsaṅghikanikāya, except that the former (the Sthavira and Sammiti) leave the ends of the skirt outside, while the latter presses it inwards as mentioned above." He[4] further informs us that the Buddhist monks could possess extra garments if they wished. The sculptural representation of the monks' garments does not give us any idea specially about the Nivāsana.

As regards wearing of shoes or other footwear, Yuan Chwang[5] mentions that "most of the people go barefoot and shoes are rare." However, it was quite common amongst the men of status and the ruling classes. An ivory footwear[6] has been discovered at Nālandā. The Gupta kings on their coins are shown wearing full-boots. Again, boots are frequently depicted in the Sun images of this period, which are definitely of Iranian type.

Ornaments:—Use of ornaments is an old practice in Indian society. Our early Sanskrit literature is full of description of different varieties of ornaments, used by both the sexes. The sculptures abound in representation of a variety of ornaments like Phalakahāra, Phalakavalaya, Ekāvali, etc., mentioned in the 'Arthaśāstra' of Kauṭilya. These have been exquisitely represented in the Didārganja image[7] which comes nearest in date to the text. Similarly, the ornaments referred to by Kālidāsa are depicted in the sculpture of the period.

The words Bhushaṇa,[8] Ābharaṇa[9] etc. have been used in Sanskrit literature for ornaments. The ornaments were prepared from gold, silver,

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[1] Plates 31 and 32 can give a comparative idea of the distinction between the two.

[2] Watters, i, p. 150.

[3] Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, pp. 66-67.

[4] *ibid.*

[5] Watters, i, p. 151 (Buddha allowed the use of footwear for the Bhikshus, infra, p. 45).

[6] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 32. 2953.

[7] See Plate 1.

[8] *Raghu.*, xviii. 45, p. 192; xix. 45, p. 200.

[9] *Māl.*, v. 7, p. 344; *Raghu.*, xiv. 54, p. 154. In the Pāla period, the word Ābharaṇa was used for ornaments, *vide*, Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 150.

bronze, iron and precious stones as pointed out by Yuan Chwang.[1] This fact gets further support from the discoveries of ornaments made from these materials in the excavations at Kumrahar and Vaiśālī.

From the sculptural representations, it is found that most parts of the body such as ears, neck, upper and lower arms, fingers, waist and ankles had their various appropriate ornaments. The head-ornaments have already been discussed before.[2]

Karṇabhūshaṇa[3] was the common word for the ear-ornaments and Karṇapūra[4] and Karṇakuṇḍala[5] were the different varieties of the same. The former corresponds to the modern ear-ring while the latter to the ear-top or pendant. Karṇakuṇḍala was again known by the name Mrikshakuṇḍala or Makarakuṇḍala. They were named after the shape of the pendants as fish or crocodile. The sculptures[6] of this period depict several varieties of the ear-ornaments worn by both male and female. (We can have an idea from the Plates of sculptures appended to this book). Majority of them formed the shape of a lotus while others of a wheel.[7] They were known as Kamala-kuṇḍala and Taṭaṅka-chakra-kuṇḍala.[8] Sometimes it was in a simple ring-shaped design. In an image of Vishṇu (at present preserved in the Sūrya temple at Baragaon near Nālandā), there is a beautiful representation of Makara-kuṇḍala[9] in his ears. In some of the bronze images from Kurkihar (preserved in the Patna Museum) the Buddha is shown wearing ear-tops in which there is a circle in the centre and four trefoil pendants are attached to the four sides of the circle.[10] There is an interesting sculpture of a drummer[11] wearing two different types of ear-ornaments. In the right ear, there is a drum-like ornament, whereas in the left there is an object like a ring. The recent excavations at Kumrahar have unearthed a few ear ornaments in bronze and copper with lotus and wheel designs.[12]

For the neck, Ekāvali,[13] a simple beaded short necklace of single string was a popular ornament. In Gupta sculptures, it is frequently depicted.[14] It was used by both men and women. Along with this short necklace, we

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[1] Watters, i, p. 151.

[2] Supra, p. 22.

[3] *Raghu.*, v. 65, p. 53.

[4] *ibid.*, viii. 27, p. 71.

[5] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 20.

[6] These sculptures are from the collections of the Patna and Nālandā Museums, unless otherwise mentioned.

[7] For details see Plates 10, 14, 18, 20, 21, etc.

[8] *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 143.

[9] The image is kept in a dark room and so, no photograph was possible.

[10] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9595.

[11] This sculpture is a panel attached in the niches of a ruined temple at Nālandā; see Plate 8.

[12] Report on Kumrahar excavations, p. 130.

[13] *Megh.*, i. 50, p. 352.

[14] See Plates 3, 8 and 13.

find women also wearing a very long beaded necklace reaching beyond the bosom and resting on the midriff. This can be seen on the person of a lady votary, standing with a child to the right of the Buddha (stucco figure) carved in the niches of the main stupa of Nālandā.[1] Also in the Pāla Period we find amongst women the practice of wearing two necklaces at a time (one short and the other long). This can be seen on the image of Vajraśāradā[2] preserved in the Nālandā Museum. Another most favoured neck-ornament during the Gupta period was Vyāghranakha often mentioned by Bāṇa in his 'Kādambarī.'[3] It is very beautifully depicted in the image of Bodhisattva[4] (stucco figure in the niches of the main stupa at Nālandā) and Kārttikeya[5] (both belong to the Gupta period).

Necklaces of different and elaborate designs have been represented on the sculptures of the Pāla period. This is evident from the large number of images of this period found in Bihar. For example, in one of the images of Lokanātha,[6] we find besides an Ekāvali, a necklace of three strings having a triangular pendant attached in the middle. There are hollows in the pendant indicating the spaces for inserting precious stones. In another image of Tārā,[7] we find the neck-ornament similar to the modern Hasulī, an ornament made of solid metal. In another image of Tārā,[8] we find this ornament artistically carved out in floral design. Such floral designs of necklaces are very popular with the images of the Pāla period. Practically every image has its own different design. (A comparative idea of the varied patterns of such necklaces can be had from the Plates appended).[9] Although the designs are many, they are all shaped like the half-moon. Thus in modern terms for the shape, it may be called Chandrahāra, i.e., a necklace shaped after the half-moon.

For arm-ornaments, Valaya[10] and Keyūra[11] are mentioned in the works of Kālidāsa. The Valaya was worn on the wrist and may be compared with the Kaṅgan (bracelet) or Bālā (bangle), whereas the Keyūra was worn on the upper part of the arm, and it may be identified with Bājūbanda (armlet). The sculptural representations show males and females wearing these arm-ornaments. From the sculptures we find that the males usually wore one or at the most, two bangles,[12] whereas its number varied in the case of women who usually wore more than one bangle. However, there is always a slight difference between the bangles used by males and females. The bangles of the

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[1] Plate 16.
[2] Plate 30; Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 3-5.
[3] *Kādambarī*, p. 20, "Vyāghranakhyaṁkitamanditā."
[4] See Plate 14.
[5] Plate 2; Patna Museum, Arch. No. 6003.
[6] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9786; See Plate 17.
[7] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9770; See Plate 19.
[8] *ibid.*, Arch. No. 1578; Plate 26.
[9] See Plates 17, 21, 23 to 27.
[10] *Śāk.*, vi. 6, p. 106.
[11] *Raghu.*, vi. 68, p. 64; vii. 50, p. 75; xvi. 56, p. 175.
[12] See Plate 34.

latter are depicted as being much thinner. It is interesting to note that the sculptural representations belonging to the Gupta period almost invariably depict males as wearing only one bangle in each wrist, whereas we find the males usually wearing two bangles in the images belonging to the Pāla period.[1]

Besides the above type of Valaya, there was another variety of wrist ornament which is depicted only in the female images of the Pāla period. It was a kind of a bracelet (Kaṅgan) generally barrel-shaped and four or five inches wide.[2] This type of bracelet is in vogue even now, and is known as Pahuchī.

Keyūra was the ornament worn on the upper-arm and may be compared with the modern armlet (Bājūbanda). This too, was very common among the males as well as females. There is a beautiful description of Keyūra by Bāṇa[3] in his book 'Kādambarī.' He has described it as entwining the arm like snakes. The sculptures of the period also depict the Keyūra in the same way. It is very common in the Gupta stucco figures and the Pāla bronze images.[4] The most common design of Keyūra in the Gupta sculptures is shaped like a thick bangle attached with trefoils.[5]

In the Pāla sculptures (unlike the ones belonging to the Gupta period) we find several varieties of Keyūra worn both by men and women. In fact, each image depicts a different variety of it. But most common and popular among them was of Mukuṭa type or Mayūra-keyūra shaped after a crown or a peacock feather respectively.[6]

Kālidāsa[7] has mentioned the rings, an ornament for the finger, though the sculptures of the period do not throw any light on its use. The Chandra Gupta and Kumāradevī type of coins show the king presenting a ring to the queen.[8] The recent excavations at Kumrahar[9] have brought to light a few pieces of rings, which suggest the use of the finger ring in those days.

Mekhalā[10] was an ornament to be worn round the waist. It may be identified with modern Kamaradhanī (girdle). Besides Mekhalā, Kālidāsa has alluded to it by another name, that is, Kanchi.[11] From the sculptures it appears that it was used both by men and women and was in vogue in the Gupta as well as in the Pāla periods.

On the ankles Nūpuras[12] or Neuras[13] were worn. Like other ornaments,

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[1] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 512/87; See Plate 34.
[2] See Plates 23 and 35.
[3] *Kādambarī*, p. 9, "Yatendranilakeyūrayugalena."
[4] See Plates 13, 18, 19.
[5] Plates 11, 12.
[6] See Plates 17, 23 to 25, 27, 35.
[7] *Śāk.*, vi, p. 98.
[8] Allan, op. cit., pl. iii; very clear in Nos. 5 and 10.
[9] Report on Kumrahar Excavations, Pl. 30.
[10] *Raghu.*, viii. 64, p. 87; xix. 35, p. 197.
[11] *ibid.*, vi. 43, p. 61.
[12] *Raghu.*, viii. 63, p. 87.
[13] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 150.

they were used by both the sexes, as is evident from the sculptures.[1]

There is no mention of any ornament for the nose, as well as the toes in the literature of the period. The sculptures of the period also do not depict any of these ornaments. Therefore, we may conclude that the ornaments of the nose and toes[2] were not in general use.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SOCIETY

From the works of Kālidāsa and the evidence recorded by foreign travellers and contemporary literature, we come to know that the people were honest and fond of good work. They had respect for learning, and they were orthodox in faith.[3] The sense of etiquette was very much developed in them.

Fa-Hien[4] has written in detail about the habits, the manners and the customs of the people. There was great respect for superiors, as well as for guests in society. When a monk arrived amongst them, he was received with great honour and kindness. He was met on the road and his clothes and begging bowl were carried for him. Water was brought to wash his feet, oil to anoint him and arrangements for his entertainment were made. Hiuen-Tsiang[5] has recorded his own experiences of the time when he arrived at Nālandā monastery. He has written that when he was approaching Nālandā, the Buddhist monks came forward with standard, umbrella, flowers and perfumes to receive him. On arrival at the monastery he was offered a special seat and all facilities were given to him. Kālidāsa too appears to support this statement. From his work, we learn that, as soon as a guest arrived, he was treated with great hospitality. In fact, he was given the honour of a god and was worshipped.[6] Water was given to wash his feet[7] and then he was asked to grace a seat made of cane-weed.[8] After that he was entertained with auspicious offerings consisting of rice, honey, fruits, etc.

On meeting one another the practice of salutation was observed. A disciple fell at the feet of his preceptors, a son did likewise to his parents, while in return they received blessings from them.[9] While talking to an elder or to a socially superior person one slightly bent forward and spoke with chosen phrases and in a polite manner.[10] At the time of bidding farewell, people of equal social status embraced each other.[11] These practices of

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[1] See Plates 18, 23 and 25.

[2] At present these ornaments have come to be regarded as auspicious signs of a married woman.

[3] Watters, ii, pp. 63, 86.

[4] Legge, p. 44.

[5] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, pp. 105-06.

[6] *Kum.*, v. 31-32, p. 239.

[7] *Śāk.*, i, p. 17.

[8] *Kum.*, vi. 53, p. 253.

[9] *Raghu.*, i. 57, p. 7.

[10] *ibid.*, v. 32, p. 48.

[11] *Vik.*, i, p. 163.

salutations were still current at the time of Yuan Chwang,[1] who writes, "There are nine degrees in the etiquette of showing respect. These are: greeting with a kind enquiry, reverently bowing the head, raising the hands to the head with an inclination of the body, bowing with hands folded on the breast, bending a knee, kneeling with both knees, going down on the ground on hands and knees, bowing down with knees, elbows, and forehead to the ground, prostrating oneself on the earth." The person of distinction who received such reverence was sure to give a kind answer; he often patted on the back of the person paying respect and gave him good words of advice to show the sincerity of his affection.

But it would be unfair to carry the impression that the people were so much tied to forms of etiquette and discipline in their social behaviour that they lived a repressed life and that there was no scope for free and full expressions of the lighter sides of human personality. As a matter of fact contemporary literature and some sculptured scenes depict a life full of mirth and sports. The 'Kaumudīmahotsava' enables us to peep into the life of abandon enjoyed by common men and women on festive days. As a matter of fact some of the religious and seasonal festivals were in a way socially licensed occasions when man's otherwise repressed insticts were allowed full play in order to develop the personality of the individual, man or woman. It is, therefore, natural that in ancient India also besides rigorous social and religious rules of conduct, there was enough scope for singing, dancing, drinking and many kinds of games. The Buddhist Siddhas ridiculed the teaching that enjoined rigid unnatural, unworldly life for spiritual attainment.

RECREATION :—It was, therefore, natural that people gave due importance to recreations, which were of different types. There were both indoor and outdoor games. Among the indoor games dice was a great favourite with the people.[2] The gaming dice discovered at Nālandā monastery suggest that "the Buddhist brethren in residence here were not altogether above the amusement of less austere humanity."[3] Similar gaming dice have been discovered at Kumrahar Excavations at Patna.[4] Clay dice were found at Basarh also.[5] All these go to suggest that the game of dice was very popular among the people in those days. Playing on musical instruments was another pastime which was prevalent during the period. It is corroborated by Kālidāsa[6] as well as by coins and sculptural representations. In one type of his coins Samudra Gupta is depicted as playing on Vīṇā (lyre).[7] Samudra Gupta in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription is spoken of as outdoing Nārada, Tumburu, and others in choral skill and musical instruments.[8] This shows that singing

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1 Watters, i, p. 173.
2 *Raghu.*, vi. 18, p. 57.
3 A.S.R., 1923-24, p. 74.
4 Report on Kumrahar excavations, p. 136.
5 A.S.R., 1913-14, p. 107.
6 *Māl.*, i, p. 261.
7 Allan, op. cit., pl. v, Nos. 1-8.
8 Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, pp. 14-15.

in chorus or leading chorus and playing on instruments were regarded quite respectable arts for even gods and kings. The secular sculptures[1] of the Gupta period clearly show that amongst the musical instruments lyre, violin, flute, drum and Dundubhi were very common in society. These musical instruments were also popular during the Pāla period. This is evident from the image of Sarasvatī[2] (belonging to the Pāla period) who is shown as carrying a Vīṇā in her hands. The songs of Kaṇhapā[3] (a Buddhist Siddha) refer to Dundubhi, which was sounded on the occasion of marriages.

Amongst the outdoor games hunting was most favoured by the high class people. Numismatic evidence (like lion or tiger or rhinoceros slayer type of coins of the Gupta kings) indicate the popularity and prevalence of hunting, which was carried on with the help of bow and arrow, sword, axe, lance etc. The king hunted the animals while on foot or on elephant and horse. Dudhpani Inscription[4] refers to Ādisinha (who has been identified with Ādityaseṇa by Sinha), king of Magadha, on a hunting expedition to the forested tract of Hazaribagh district, which is even now a favourite haunt for hunters. Swimming or water-sports have also been described by Kālidāsa.[5] Near Nālandā monastery Yuan Chwang[6] refers to tanks which must have facilitated the Buddhist monks to enjoy the water-sports.

According to Vātsyāyana[7] all decent houses and palaces of kings had pleasure-gardens attached to them. Mention is also made by Kālidāsā[8] of parks or public gardens (Udyāna) which were generally situated outside the town. A town had periodical gatherings for entertainments,[9] such as Samāja (assemblies connected with worship of deities), Goshṭhi (social gathering) Āpaṇaka (drinking party), Udyānayātrā (garden party) and Samasyakrīḍā (public sports).

As for the recreation for women, Vātsyāyana[10] writes that music and dancing formed the principal indoor games. Public and dramatic concerts were often organised and girls used to go out to see them along with their elders or lovers. There are also references to girls going out to swim.[11] Besides, they used to play a number of courtyard games like 'hide and seek' and 'run and catch' which have been graphically described in 'Kāmasūtra.'[12]

Abundance of terra-cotta figurines, animals, ram-carts, balls and wheel toys and toy musical instruments discovered at the excavations (specially at Kumrahar and Basarh) show that small children played with these toys.

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[1] See Plates 5, 6, 8 to 10.
[2] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 20, 850.
[3] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 153.
[4] *E.I.*, Vol. II, p. 343, ff.
[5] *Raghu.*, xvi, 57, 67, pp. 175-76.
[6] Watters, ii, p. 164.
[7] Chakaldar, *Social Life in Ancient India*, Introduction, p. 17.
[8] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 51.
[9] *ibid.*, pp. 56-60.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 175.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 193.
[12] *ibid.*, p. 186.

From Kālidāsa, we also learn that the children played with balls.[1] In Basarh have been found the figures of a toy drum[2] and of a neat elephant in terra-cotta.[3] A hollow terra-cotta hen or duck as toy for children belonging to the Gupta period has been discovered in Basarh.[4]

SUPERSTITIONS :—The literature, belonging to the period under review, reveals that superstitions were wide-spread in society. In Kālidāsa's works, we get a large number of instances of popular superstitions. For example, throbbing of the right eye for women was considered ill,[5] while that of the left brought good luck.[6] In the case of men, the trepidation of the right arm was reckoned to be auspicious.[7] Amulets were used as a means either of defence or the achievement of triumph and were worn by men and children in lockets generally on their wrists or arms.[8] A sufficient number of such amulets have been unearthed at Kumrahar excavations[9] which have been carried out recently. Practice of magic was also not uncommon. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, there arose by the fourth century A.D. a class of literature called Dharaṇī (protective spells), which refer to the various existing superstitions.[10] The Buddhists believed that repeating these Dharaṇīs, a person would get spiritual merit and perfect knowledge. The Chinese pilgrim, Yuan Chwang, says[11] that at Bodh-Gayā, the Brethren believed that Buddhism would disappear when certain image of Avalokiteśvara in the locality was completely buried under sand.

EDUCATION

Education has always played an important part in moulding the life and culture of the people. There have been many factors which govern the system of education in vogue from time to time. Needs and requirements of the people have always determined the type of education imparted. The rise of Buddhism in this country led to the organisation of monastic institutions both for the propagation of the religion and for the training of the monks and the laity. Coming to the period under review we find that a large number of people of this state had adopted Buddhism and in order to satisfy the popular demand, the Buddhist institutions of education, which were originally meant for the monks only were gradually thrown open to the public, and in course of time, they became the most important centres of education where non-Buddhists were also admitted. In the words of Sankalia,[12] "..... by the

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[1] *Raghu.*, xvi. 83, p. 198; *Kum.*, i. 29, p. 207.
[2] A.S.R., 1913-14, p. 105.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 107.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 109.
[5] *Śāk.*, v, p. 84.
[6] *Māl.*, v, p. 343.
[7] *Śāk.*, i, p. 11.
[8] *Raghu.*, xvi. 74, 83, pp. 177, 178.
[9] Report on Kumrahar Excavations, p. 136.
[10] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, vol. ii, pp. 380-81.
[11] Watters, i, p. 105.
[12] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, Intr., p. ix.

5th century A.D., they had completely turned themselves into veritable Houses of Learning."

The Buddhist system of education was, therefore, one of the most important systems prevalent in this State at the beginning of the period under review. Realising that the Buddhist system of education, ever since its rise, was continuously undergoing transformation and was most organized, and as such, was most suited for imparting education to the country, the Guptas encouraged it in many ways. Both the Gupta as well as the Pāla rulers liberally gave large donations in cash and in kind to these monasteries for the spread of higher standard of education. For example, the rise of Nālandā Samghārāma was due to the generosity of Śakrāditya (a Gupta ruler) who was its founder according to Yuan Chwang.[1] Thus one of the main factors for the rise and development of these monasteries as educational centres or universities in Bihar was the patronage of the kings. Promotion of education and culture was always regarded as one of the important duties of the kings in ancient India. It is also obvious that the Gupta emperors, though followers of Brāhmaṇic religion, would have thought it useful to contribute to the advancement of Buddhist monasteries as educational centres when a large number of their subjects were Buddhists by faith and looked upon Buddhist monasteries as their religious and cultural centres. Royal patronage helped some of the existing monasteries of this State to rise into big residential monastic colleges and Universities like Nālandā, Vikramaśilā and Oddaṇṭapurī. Due to their being the most developed and widely known centres for Buddhist learning, they attracted Buddhist scholars not only from different parts of India but also from far off countries in Asia.

Fa-Hien does not mention Nālandā as a centre of advanced studies and researches in Buddhist and other branches of learning. One of the most prominent centres of learning in his time was Pāṭaliputra[2] where he saw one Mahāyāna monastery "very grand and beautiful" and another of Hīnayāna. The two together contained six or seven hundred monks. "Shamanas of the highest virtue from all quarters, and students, inquirers wishing to find out truth and the grounds of it, all resort to these monasteries."[2] This shows that these monasteries served as centres of advanced instruction for maturer monks.[3] This was due to having as their residents several teachers of great renown. One of them was "a great Brāhmaṇa, named Rādhā-sami, a professor of the Mahāyānas, of clear discernment and much wisdom, who understood everything, living by himself in spotless purity.....He might be more than fifty years old, and all the kingdom looked up to him.....By means of this one man, the Law of the Buddha was widely made known."[4] The other

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 164, Śakrāditya has been identified with Kumāra Gupta I.

[2] Legge, p. 78.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] Pāṭaliputra was a centre of learning from its very early history. A 10th century (A.D.) poet, Rājaśekhara, informs us that great poets and authors like Piṅgala, Pāṇinī, Vyādi, Varsha, Upavarsha and Kātyāyana had come to

distinguished teacher seen by Fa-Hien was also a Brāhmaṇa named Manjuśrī "whom the Shamanas of greatest virtue in the kingdom and the Mahāyāna Bhikshus honour and look up to."[1] In Rājagriha, there was also another monastery, distinguished as a centre of Buddhist education.[2] It was also seen by Yuan Chwang.[3]

At Gayā, the place where the Buddha attained enlightenment, Fa-Hien[4] found three monasteries, in all of which monks were residing. He praised the efficiency of these monasteries or institutions. The disciplinary rules were strictly observed by them. "The laws regulating their demeanour in sitting, rising, and entering when the others are assembled, are those which have been practised by every saint since the Buddha was in the world down to the present day."[5] These monasteries were centres of learning, but had not yet developed into organised universities like Nālandā and Vikramaśilā which came into prominence after the return of Fa-Hien. During the reign of Nayapāla, Atiśa or Śrī Dīpaṅkara was the Head of the monasteries at Bodh-Gayā (Vajrāsana).[6] These monasteries were maintained by the endowments of the laity including kings and merchants, princes and the heads of the Vaiśyas.[7] In the 11th century Ka-so-ri-pa was the great teacher in the Vajrāsana University, and he taught the Tibetan Scholar Khon-phu-ba the Sādhana of the name of Tārā.[8]

When Yuan Chwang came to India in the first half of the seventh century A.D., Nālandā had grown to a full-fledged residential university. According to a tradition mentioned by Yuan Chwang, Nālandā was called after a dragon living in a tank in a mango park situated to the south of the monastery.[9] As regards the origin of the monastery, he further states that the lands of the monastery were offered as gifts to the Buddha by five hundred merchants who bought them for the purpose for as many as "ten koṭi of gold coins."[10] This original endowment was the precursor of a continuous series of endowments through the centuries by a succession of sovereigns. This indicates the hoary antiquity of Nālandā.[11] The endowments made by the kings and the merchants, helped the Nālandā monastery to grow into a residential university.

Pāṭaliputra to get their scholarship recognised by the Synod of Pāṭaliputra Scholars, p. 55 (Baroda ed.).

[1] Legge, p. 79.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 82.
[3] Watters, ii, p. 162.
[4] Legge, p. 78.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] J.B.T.S., i, pp. 7-31.
[7] Legge, pp. 42-43, 45-47 and 89.
[8] *The Blue Annals*, I, p. 228.
[9] Watters, ii, p. 166.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 164.
[11] Tāranātha in his history of Buddhism, records the tradition that Nālandā was the birthplace of Sāriputta whose Chaitya was seen by Aśoka who added a temple to it. And "in this way the first founder of the Nālandā Vihāra was Aśoka." But the place did not become educationally important before the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism at the beginning of the Christian era. Tāra-

Yuan Chwang[1] mentions six monasteries having been built by as many kings and these constituted the Nālandā establishment in his time. These six kings[2] were Śakrāditya, his son and successor Buddha Gupta, Tathāgata Gupta, Bālāditya, his son and successor Vajrà, and an unnamed king of mid-India. Besides gifts of buildings, the University received gifts of lands. In Yuan Chwang's time, "the king of the country remitted the revenues of about 100 villages for the endowments of the convent."[3] In I-Tsing's time "the lands in its possession" bestowed upon the monastery by kings of many generations "contained more than 200 villages."[4] Besides these literary evidences, we have epigraphical references[5] about gifts made to the Nālandā monasteries. For example, an inscription states that a minister of king Yaśovarmadeva, made various gifts to the monks of Nālandā, provided for their daily food, and purchased the Vihāra and its accessories by giving their price, and redonated them. Next followed the benefactions of the Pāla kings. There is another inscription which refers to the construction of a monastery at Nālandā by Bālaputradeva, king of Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumātrā), and the grant by king Devapāladeva of five villages for the maintenance of this monastery at his request conveyed to the Pāla king by his ambassador named Balavarman.[6] Out of the income of these estates the University provided for all its alumni free of cost their four requisites, viz., clothes, food, bedding and medicine. The number of the resident-scholars in Yuan Chwang's time "always reached the number of 10,000," counting the priests belonging to the convent or strangers residing therein.[7] During the time of I-Tsing,[8] "the number of the residents is great and exceeds 3,000."

The University area was marked off by a lofty enclosing wall with one gate. The gate opened into the great college from which were separated eight other halls, standing in the middle of the Samghārāma.[9] The Samghārāmas were three to four storeys high, and their lofty height and grandeur are repeatedly mentioned by Yuan Chwang[10] and his biographer.[11] These observations of Yuan Chwang are corroborated by the Nālandā Stone Inscription

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nātha has further stated that Nālandā, before its rise into a residential university, was a place of Hindu learning, where discussion between Buddhists and Hindus usually took place. J.A.S.B. (N.S.), i, p. 227.

[1] Watters, ii, p. 164.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 112.

[4] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 65.

[5] *E.I.*, xx, p. 37.

[6] *E.I.*, xvii, p. 311.

[7] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 112; Some express a doubt on the accuracy of the figure on the basis of archaeological excavations of the ancient Nālandā University. But it may be pointed out that the excavations are not yet thorough and complete.

[8] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 65.

[9] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 111.

[10] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 170.

[11] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, pp. 111-12.

of Yaśovarman of the 8th century A.D.[1] It mentions "She (Nālandā) had a row of Vihāras, the line of whose tops touched the sky.....Nālandā (was full of the) heaps of the rays of the Chaityas shining and bright like white clouds...." Regarding the Nālandā monastery I-Tsing[2] (who came here more than 40 years after Yuan Chwang) also writes, "There are eight halls and three hundred apartments in this monastery." The Archaeological excavations so far have laid bare about eleven monasteries at Nālandā. The monastery-site No. 1 seems to be the oldest. These monasteries at Nālandā give us a good idea of the rooms in which the Bhikshus stayed. The monasteries form a rectangle and contain many small cells which vary very slightly in size but average some ten feet square. Some of these are single-seated and some double-seated with one or two benches of stone provided for sleeping. Each room also shows a niche to hold a lamp and another to hold books. Ovens of large sizes have also been unearthed, showing the common kitchen and the mess of the monks in the monastery.[3] All these go to show that there was an elaborate arrangement of boarding and lodging for the students of the monasteries.

About the teaching and scholarship of the Nālandā University, Yuan Chwang writes,[4] "In the establishment were some thousands of Brethren, all men of great ability and learning, several hundreds being highly esteemed and famous; the Brethren were strict in observing the precepts and regulations of their Order; they were looked upon as models all over India; learning and discussing they found the day too short; day and night they admonished each other, juniors and seniors mutually helping to perfection. If among them were any who did not talk of the mysteries of the Tripiṭaka, such persons, being ashamed, lived aloof. Hence foreign students came to the establishment to put an end to their doubts and then became celebrated, and those who stole the name (of Nālandā Brother) were all treated with respect wherever they went." There was a great rush for admission to this University.[5] According to a Tibetan account[6] Nālandā was maintaining a splendid library to meet the needs of the hundreds of teachers and thousands of students who were engaged in the study of different sciences. The library quarter was known as Dharmaganja, "Mart of Religion." It was located in three splendid buildings appropriately called Ratnasāgara, Ratnodadhi and Ratnaranjaka respectively. In Ratnodadhi, which was nine-storeyed, there were the sacred scripts called Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra and Tāntrik works such as Samāja-guhya, etc.

The University was a corporate institution and had its own seal or monogram. The upper field of the seal is taken by the wheel of the law flanked by a deer. This was the device of the deer park where the Buddha first set the

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[1] *E.I.*, xx, p. 45.
[2] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 154.
[3] A.S.R., 1915-16, p. 35.
[4] Watters, ii, p. 165.
[5] *ibid.*, Infra, p. 83.
[6] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, Appendix A, p. 147.

Dharmachakra or the wheel of the law in motion.[1] According to Sastri,[2] "these sealings were for being fastened to letters or manuscripts or other documents sent from Nālandā. They would vouch for the genuineness of the documents and might have also been affixed to the certificates 'Praśamsā' or 'Pramāṇa-patras,' which the various educational establishments at Nālandā gave to the scholars, to distinguish them from frauds of whom Hiuen-Tsiang has spoken in his accounts." Besides the Mahāvihāra, other vihāras of Nālandā had also seals of different types with legends such as Sandhekuṭe-Vāsika-Bhikshu Samgha.[3]

Like Nālandā, the University of Vikramaśilā was also the result of royal benefactions. We know nothing about its origin either from the accounts of Yuan Chwang or from I-Tsing. This shows that Vikramaśilā came into existence after them. We owe its history to Tāraṇātha's well known work which states that king Dharmapāla founded Śrī Vikramaśilā Vihāra on a suitable side of a hillock on the bank of the Ganges in Magadha.[4] According to old mythology, it is said to have been named after a Yaksha called Vikrama who was burried there.[5] It has been mentioned in Tibetan mythology that Āchārya Kampilya, a professor of Buddhist Tantras who obtained Siddhi (or perfection), while once roaming, was struck with features of bluff, rocky hill with its lofty range, and magnificent natural beauty and picturesqueness of the landscape beyond. Its situation near the Ganges made it an ideal place for meditation. He felt that the place was ideally suited for the site of a Vihāra or a monastery and that it could be converted into a centre for the use of the Samgha. By dint of his power as a seer he also foretold that a great Vihāra would be built on that hill. In course of time Kampilya himself was reborn as Dharmapāla and founded this University in the shape of a monastery and as its first donor was a king, this University was known as Royal Universtiy. It might be a merely fictitious story after all, but this much is established that king Dharmapāla was the founder of the University of Vikramaśilā in the ninth century A.D.

Dharmapāla endowed Vikramaśilā with rich grants, fixing regular allow-

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[1] M.A.S.I., No. 66, pl. ii. b.

[2] *ibid.*, p. 27.

[3] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 27.

[4] There is a great controversy regarding the site of the University. Cunningham (A.S.I., viii, p. 75) has suggested the village Silao, as its site, but it is not possible as the Ganges could never have been near it; Vidyabhusana (J.A.S.B., 1909) had identified it with Sultanganj in Bhagalpur district. But the hill is a very small one, too small to have a monastery with six gates and a quadrangle or open space which could hold an assembly of 8,000 men and also a large number of temples and colleges that it contained. Therefore this identification is also not very satisfactory. The Tibetan chronicles mention clearly that the monastery was situated in bluff hill on the right bank of the Ganges. Therefore, the identification of Patharghat in Bhagalpur for the site of the monastery by De seems to be very correct (J.A.S.B., vol. v. 1, p. 7).

[5] J.B.T.S., I, pp. 10-11.

ances for the maintenance of priests and students. The University building was surrounded by walls. There was a central hall, called the House of Science. It had six gates which opened on its six colleges, each having one hundred and eight professors. There was also a large open space in between the six colleges which could hold an assembly of 8,000 persons.[1] There was a Dharmaśālā at the gate outside the wall of the University, where strangers arriving late after the closing of the gate were sheltered.[2]

The gates of the University were guarded by the most erudite of its scholars called Dvāra-Paṇḍitas, who had specialised in particular subjects. Students desirous of entering the University had to appear before the Dvāra-Paṇḍitas who used to test the merits and intelligence of each student. According to Tāranāthā,[3] Prajñā-pāramita was in charge of the southern gate, Ratnākaraśānti of the eastern, Vāgīśvarakīrti of the western, Nāropanti of the northern, while the first central and the second central gates were in charge of Ratnavajra and Jñānaśrīmitra respectively, during the reign of Chaṇaka or Nayapāla. The object of such hard tests was evidently to discourage promiscuous admission of students into the colleges of this University. Besides these Dvāra-Paṇḍitas, we have references to many other distinguished scholars of Vikramaśilā.[4] It is interesting to note that like present day convocations, we find degrees and titles being given to the Vikramaśilā students by the reigning kings.[5] Tibetan authorities inform us that Jetāri and Ratnavajra had received degrees at the hands of king Mahipāla and Chaṇaka (Nayapāla) respectively.[6] Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna was closely associated with this University before his departure to Tibet. As a student he had received instructions from Jetāri, a scholar of the Vikramaśilā University.

Oddaṇṭapurī was another Buddhist educational institution in Magadha famous for its Tāntric study. It was founded by Gopāla, the first ruler of the Pāla dynasty, in the 8th century A.D.[7] The site of the monastery has been generally identified with the modern town of Biharshariff, the head quarters of the Bihar sub-division of the Patna district. The Oddaṇṭapurī Vihāra had the distinction of the association of Mahārakshita Śīlarakshita from whom Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna had received sacred vows.[8] Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna also on his return from Suvarṇadvīpa and Ceylon was appointed the high priest of the Oddaṇṭapurī Vihāra besides that of the Vikramaśilā Vihāra.[9] From the description of Minhaz, we learn that this monastery was a big establishment and it was surrounded by high walls. When the Muslims, under Bakhatiyar

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[1] J.B.T.S., I, pp. 10-11.
[2] Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, p. 151.
[3] Tāranātha, *History of Buddhism*, p. 235; Quoted from Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, p. 149; *The Blue Annals*, I, p. 206.
[4] Infra, p. 177.
[5] Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, p. 153.
[6] Bose, *Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities*, pp. 47, 61.
[7] Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 367.
[8] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I, 674.
[9] *ibid.*

Khilji raided this monastic town, they looked upon this high walled monastery as a fort and called it Kilā and completely destroyed it. Instead of finding treasures, they found books, but having massacred all the inhabitants of the monastery, they did not find anyone to read these books for them and so they burnt the library treasures.[1] It was on the model of Oddaṇṭapurī Vihāra that a monastery (Sam-Ye) was built at Tibet by the then king of the country with the assistance of Śānta-Rakshita.[2]

Like Nālandā, Oddaṇṭapurī monastery was also a corporate body and had its own seal and monogram.[3] From the discovery of a seal of the Oddaṇṭapurī monastery at Nālandā, we learn that it had contacts with the Nālandā monastery. It was here at the Oddaṇṭapurī monastery, that Ratnākaraśānti, one of the Dvāra-Paṇḍitas of Vikramaśilā University, got his ordination in the Sarvāstivāda school.[4] Even Atiśa, the high priest of Vikramaśilā, took the sacred vow at the 19th year from Śīla Rakshita, the Mahāsanghika Āchārya of the Oddaṇṭapurī monastery.[5]

Tilāḍha or Tilāḍhaka[6] was another famous monastery in Magadha, which is referred to by both Yuan Chwang and I-Tsing. Yuan Chwang tells us a good deal about the splendour of the Tilāḍhaka monastery. He writes,[7] "This establishment, erected by the last descendant of king Bimbisāra, had four courts with three-storeyed halls, lofty terraces and a succession of open passages. It was the rendezvous of eminent scholars who flocked to it from all regions. The Brethren in it, all Mahāyānists, were above 1,000 in number." This shows that the monastery was in a flourishing condition. We further learn from Yuan Chwang[8] that this monastery was under the control of a renowned priest named Prajñābhadra. I-Tsing[9] mentions another scholar named Gyānachandra who lived in that monastery during his visit. According to I-Tsing[10] it was two Yojanas distant from Nālandā, and it has been identified with the modern village, Tillara, west of Nālandā.[11]

There was another monastery at Phullahari and its hermitage is frequently referred to as a place where several famous Buddhist Āchāryas lived, and Sanskrit texts were translated into Tibetan in collaboration with Tibetan scholars.[12] It was situated in Magadha. Majumdar thinks that it was somewhere near Monghyr,[13] but the Biography of the Buddhist Tibetan Scholar

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[1] Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its historians*, vol. ii, p. 306.
[2] Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 28; J.A.S.B., 1881, pt. i., p. 226.
[3] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 40, pl. iii. c.
[4] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 140.
[5] Das, *Indian Pundits in the Land of Snow*, p. 51.
[6] Watters, ii, p. 105; Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 184.
[7] Watters, ii, p. 105.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 106.
[9] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 184.
[10] *ibid.*
[11] Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India*, vol. i, p. 456; J.A.S.B., xli (1872), p. 250.
[12] *Cordier Cat.*, i. 52; ii. 102, 162.
[13] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 418.

Dharmasvāmin shows that it was in the forest north of Nālandā.[1] 'The Blue Annals' also places it in the vicinity of Nālandā.[2]

The foregoing accounts show that the Buddhistic system of education was predominant in Bihar during the period under review and there were many famous monastic educational centres, some of which had developed into international centres of learning.

RULES FOR ADMISSION :—In the early period the Buddhist monasteries denied admission to the following classes of people :—One affected with the five diseases, viz., leprosy, boils, dry leprosy, consumption and fits[3]; one who was in the royal service[4]; a proclaimed robber[5]; or one who had broken out of jail[6]; one who had been punished with scourging[7] or branding[8]; a debtor[9]; a slave[10]; any body under fifteen years of age[11]; an eunuch[12]; and one deformed in person or any of whose limbs was cut off.[13] Those who were exempted had to pass through the ceremonies of Pabbajjā and Upsampadā.[14]

In course of time when the Buddhist monasteries began to admit advanced students who did not desire to be ordained as monks, the system of admission was modified. Thus, at Nālandā and Vikramaśilā monasteries the students were admitted by the Dvāra-Paṇḍitas or gatekeepers (one at Nālandā and six at Vikramaśilā). Yuan Chwang[15] has described how a student desiring admission had to undergo hard tests including taking part in discussions. The tests were so severe that only two or three candidates out of ten eventually succeeded in getting admission into the University. But even though the standard of admission was so high there was still a great rush for admission to these Universities. The severity of the examination was necessary to maintain the high standard of learning for which the Universities were so famous.

AIMS OF EDUCATION :—The infusion of a spirit of piety and religiousness was among the important aims of these educational-cum-monastic institutions. Religion played a great part in ancient Indian life and the teachers were mostly priests. It is, therefore, natural that the infusion of a religious spirit

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1 *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. 85.
2 *The Blue Annals*, I, p. 382.
3 *S.B.E.*, vol. xiii, pp. 191-94.
4 *ibid.*, p. 196.
5 *ibid.*, p. 198.
6 *ibid.*, p. 197.
7 *ibid.*, p. 198.
8 *ibid.*, p. 198.
9 *ibid.*, p. 199.
10 *ibid.*, p. 199.
11 *ibid.*, p. 204.
12 *ibid.*, p. 215.
13 *ibid.*, p. 225.
14 *ibid.*, pp. 186-191.
15 Watters, ii, p. 165.

in the minds of the rising generation was considered as the first and foremost aim of education.

It appears from the accounts of I-Tsing[1] that the other aim of education was the spread of Buddhist religion among the laymen of the country. At one place he writes, "The instruction of pupils (Saddhivihārika) is an important matter for the prosperity (of religion). If this is neglected, the extinction of religion is sure to follow."

The formation of character and development of personality were also among the aims of education. The very atmoshpere in which students lived, was calculated to give a proper turn to the character. They were under the direct and personal supervision of their teachers who were to watch not only their intellectual progress but also their moral behaviour.

The development of personality was sought to be realised by eulogising the feeling of self-respect, by encouraging the sense of self-confidence, by inculcating the virtue of self-restraint and by fostering the powers of discrimination and judgement. The student was always to remember that he was the custodian and torch-bearer of the culture of the race.

The inculcation of civic and social duties was also considered necessary. A graduate of the Vihāras was not to lead a self-centred life. He was to teach his lore to the rising generation even when there was no prospect of a fee.

Later on, Buddhist education underwent a change in ideology and practice. It became secular in nature and began to impart vocational education also. Education was to pave the way for royal appointments and other lucrative jobs.

Curriculum :—The Chinese travellers, while describing the general condition of India, furnish us with some idea of the curricula of studies in vogue in the monastic institutions. Yuan Chwang[2] says that children began by learning the alphabet and the Siddhirastu, a primer of twelve chapters. At the age of seven they began to study the following five Vidyās :—

(1) Śabda-vidyā (Grammar)
(2) Śilpasthāna-vidyā (Arts and crafts)
(3) Chikitsā-vidyā (Medicine)
(4) Hetu-vidyā (Logic), and
(5) Adhyātma-vidyā (Philosophy)

I-Tsing[3] gives more details. According to him the name for the general secular literature in India was Vyākaraṇa of which there were about five works similar to the classics of the Divine Land (China).

(1) The Siddha—composition for beginners known as Siddhirastu, signifying 'Be there success for so named is the first section of this small book of learning.'

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[1] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 116.
[2] Watters, i, pp. 154-55.
[3] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, pp. 169-79.

(2) The Sūtra—the Sūtra is the foundation of all grammatical science. It contains 1,000 Ślokas and is the work of Pāṇini. Children began to learn the Sūtra when they were eight years old and could repeat it in eight months' time.

(3) The book on Dhātu—It consisted of 1,000 Ślokas and treated particularly grammatical rules.

(4) The book on the three Khilas—Khila means 'waste land,' and is so called because this part of grammar may be likened to the way in which a farmer prepares his fields for corn.

(5) The Vritti-sūtra (Kāśikāvritti)—This is a commentary on the foregoing Sūtra (i.e., Pāṇini's Sūtra). It cites the text of the Sūtra, and explains minutely its manifold meaning, consisting altogether of 18,000 Ślokas. The boys began to study this commentary at the age of fifteen, and finished it in five years.

Thus it seems to have been a long course of grammatical study of Sanskrit language. The boys began to learn it from the age of six till they were twenty, which was a preliminary to the study of higher subjects in the secondary stage of education.

The curriculum was not the same for all grades. Students were assigned to different classes according to their progress in studies. The lowest class seems to have been made up of students who were repeaters of the Sūttāntas. The next higher class was of those "who were in charge of the Vinaya," which they mastered by discussing it with one another. To yet higher class belonged those who were training themselves as teachers of the Dharma. All these different classes of students were separately lodged in hostels lest their mixing up should affect their different studies.[1]

This system of education continued for a long time. In course of time, when the Buddhist monasteries became centres of higher knowledge and specialisation it is found that the subjects of teaching became diversified gradually.

At the University of Nālandā, we find that the courses of study covered a wide range. Almost all knowledge both Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist, Sacred and Secular, philosophy and logic were taught there. For instance as stated in 'Life,' the students at Nālandā "study the Great Vehicle, and also the works belonging to the eighteen sects, and not only so, but even ordinary works, such as the Vedas and other books, the Hetuvidyā, Śabdavidyā, the Chikitsāvidyā, the works on magic or Atharvavidyā, the Sāṁkhya, and besides these, they thoroughly investigated the 'Miscellaneous' works."[2] Yuan Chwang himself became a student of Nālandā for the study of the Yoga-śāstra, in which Śīlabhadra the Head of the Nālandā Mahāvihāra, was the highest living authority.[3] His study of the Yoga-śāstra was followed by the study of other subjects like Nyāya, Hetuvidyā, Śabdavidyā, and the like, as also of the books of the Brāhmaṇas with the wide area of knowledge covered by them including philological, legal, philosophical, astronomical subjects, and the Sanskrit Grammar

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[1] *S.B.E.*, vol. xx, pp. 6-7.
[2] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 112.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 107.

of Pāṇini.[1] Thus Yuan Chwang acquired all the knowledge of Buddhist works and also studied the sacred books of the Brāhmaṇas, during his stay at Nālandā. It was due to its high standard of learning that Nālandā attracted a keen student of Mahāyāna like Yuan Chwang, who though already a 'Master of Law' and honoured as such in India, found it profitable to stay there for some time for study. It also attracted keen students of Hīnayāna like I-Tsing who took advantage of its education for a decade.

That the Vedas were taught at Nālandā as specialised subjects is further proved by the archaeological evidence. A number of seals of Traivaidyā and Chaturvaidyā have been found at the excavations at Nālandā. These terms found on the seals do not indicate any certain communities or functionaries. Traivaidyā must have been a teacher or scholar conversant with the knowledge of the three Vedas. Similarly Chaturvaidyā must have been a teacher having knowledge of the four Vedas.[2]

From references in Tibetan works to Nālandā as a great centre of Tāntric studies, or to a person as a professor of Tantra at Nālandā,[3] and also from a number of books evidently Tāntric, ascribed to the Paṇḍitas of Nālandā in the Chinese literature, it would appear that Tantra was, perhaps, a very popular subject with the students as well as the professors in the Nālandā University.[4]

It appears from the records of Yuan Chwang's biographer[5] that there was an astronomical observatory at Nālandā and that Astronomy formed a part of the Students' curricula.

The courses of study were perhaps less comprehensive at Vikramaśilā than at Nālandā. The most important branch of learning taught here was the Tantra. Next to the Tantras were Grammar, Metaphysics and Logic. The fact that Dvāra-Paṇḍitas were eminent logicians goes to prove that logic was a popular subject.[6] Unfortunately there is no information about the duration or gradation of the course at Vikramaśilā, but it is quite likely that it was more systematically organised here than at any other centre of ancient Indian education. For, unlike any other monastic college, we find diplomas and titles being given to the Vikramaśilā students at the end of their course by the reigning king of the country.[7] On the walls of the University were painted images of Paṇḍitas eminent for their learning and character.[8]

The monasteries, although they rigidly enforced the educational plans, were not unmindful of the needs of physical health and other activities like

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[1] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 121.
[2] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 34.
[3] Kamalaśīla was a professor of Tantra at Nālandā : Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 129.
[4] Infra, p. 91.
[5] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 111.
[6] Vidyabhusana, op. cit., p. 151.
[7] Supra, p. 39.
[8] Vidyabhusana, op. cit., p. 151.

games, sports, etc. I-Tsing[1] tells us that "In India both priests and laymen are generally in the habit of taking walks at suitable hours and at their pleasure. The walking hours are in the forenoon and late in the afternoon." The discovery of the gaming dice at these monasteries suggests that the monks used to play dice-game.[2] They enjoyed water-sports also.[3]

DISCIPLINE :—The Buddha had framed a set of rules for observance by a Buddhist monk or a novice which constituted the basis of a monk's life in the monasteries, and were in the main observed also in the great educational institutions in the Gupta and the Pāla periods. Some of the important rules of the discipline may be mentioned here.

There were elaborate rules for begging, which were very comprehensive. A monk was to go amidst the houses properly clad, with his limbs under control, with downcast eyes with his robes not tucked up, not laughing, or speaking loudly, not swaying his body or his arms or his head about, or his robe pulled over his head, and without walking on his heels.[4] Begging of food was confined to approved houses only. A novice had to be acquainted beforehand with the official declaration of the order as regards lawful and unlawful resorts for alms. The Bhikshus could not go in a body to the same householder and ask for meals and thus be a burden upon him. Not more than three were permitted to seek alms at a common place together.[5]

There were rules of etiquette at eating.[6] The senior monks sat apart from the juniors. Drinking water was to be received carefully in the bowl held with both hands so as not to splash on any body. Boiled rice had to be similarly received in the bowl with some room left for the curry. The senior monk was not to start eating until the boiled rice had been served to all.

There were elaborate regulations regarding the clothing of the Bhikshus.[7] The use of shoes or footwear was permitted when rough path had to be trodden, but the same was not allowed in the open Āmra or when going into the villages except in the case of the sick.[8]

In addition to the rules for the regulation of daily lives there were elaborate rules for the maintenance of discipline which the novices had to observe. The novice had to live a life of strict discipline under a teacher.[9] He had to keep the ten precepts, viz., abstinence from destroying life, stealing, impurity, lying, intoxicating liquor, eating at forbidden times, dancing, singing, use of garlands and scents, high beds and accepting gold and silver.

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[1] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 114.
[2] Supra, p. 31.
[3] Supra, p. 32.
[4] *S.B.E.*, vol. xx, pp. 286-87.
[5] *ibid.*, pp. 290-91, 250-51.
[6] *ibid.*, pp. 285-88.
[7] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, pp. 72-78; Supra, pp. 25-26.
[8] *S.B.E.*, vol. xx, pp. 273-75; *S.B.E.*, vol. xvii, pp. 14-16.
[9] *ibid.*, vol. xiii, p. 211.

He was expelled from the fraternity, if he violated any of the first five precepts or if he spoke against the Buddha, the Dharma and the Samgha or if he held false doctrines or had sexual intercourse with Bhikshuṇis.[1] In five other cases he was liable to be punished. The punishment could be inflicted by any Bhikshu, with the consent of the Uppajjhāya.[2]

A high standard of discipline was maintained in the residential University of Nālandā. Yuan Chwang[3] has recorded that "during the seven centuries of its history," there did not occur a single case of "a guilty rebellion" against the institution. This was mainly due to the fact that even important matters like the residential arrangements of the University were left to be administered by its students who decided the annual assignment of rooms to boarders.[4] Discipline was left to the students, as their own concern. They were to decide the trial and punishment of offences against the fraternity, and also the expulsion of recalcitrants.[5] According to I-Tsing,[6] the rules and regulations governing life in the monasteries were more strict at Nālandā than elsewhere.

From the description of a Tibetan monk,[7] we know that a Buddhist monk enjoyed greater respect than the ruler of the State. He has stated that at the convocation of the Vikramaśilā University, none of the monks, old or young, rose from their seats on the arrival of the king. But at the arrival of an unknown Buddhist monk at the spot many young Āyushmats rose from their seats to receive him with offerings of incense. The Rāja also rose from his seat to do him honour, which was followed by other monks and Paṇḍitas who were present there. This shows the highest respect accorded to the scholars in the University even in preference to the king, who himself paid due regards to the scholars.

Teacher-pupil Relationship :—Ancient Indian educational institutions have been renowned for the close student-teacher relationship and monasteries are no exception to it. Mahāvagga[8] mentions that the novice was to live for the first ten years in absolute dependence upon his Upajjhāya. Vinaya text gives in detail the relation between Upajjhāya (teacher) and the Saddhivihārika (the taught). According to it,[9] the teacher was to consider his pupil as a son while the pupil was to consider his teacher as a father. Thus bound by mutual reverence, confidence and communion of life, they progressed and reached a high stage in the doctrine and discipline.

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[1] *S.B.E.*, vol. xiii, p. 215.
[2] *ibid.*, pp. 213-14.
[3] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 112.
[4] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 86.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 63.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 65.
[7] Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, pp. 153-54.
[8] *S.B.E.*, vol. xiii, p. 154.
[9] *ibid.*

The Sigalovāda Sūtta[1] contains a section which deals with the duties of pupils and teacher. The pupil should honour his teacher by rising in his presence, by ministering to him, by supplying his wants and by attending to his instructions. The teacher should show his affection to his pupils by training them up in all that is good, by teaching them to hold knowledge fast, by instructing them in science and lore, by speaking well of them to their friends and companions and by guarding them from danger.

A pupil was to act as a personal attendant to his teacher. Sūttanipāta[2] states that, "one should serve one's preceptor just as the Devas serve Indra." This shows that there was spiritual and personal relationship. A student helped his teacher by doing a variety of manual work. He was to carry his seat and robes, supply him with water and tooth-stick, cleanse his begging bowl and utensils and accompany him as an attendant when he proceeded to the town or village for begging or preaching. Further, the pupil was not to accept presents or give presents or wait on any one else or go out, without the permission of the preceptor. If the preceptor was sick, he was to wait upon him and nurse him diligently.[3]

The preceptor too had corresponding duties.[4] He had to observe a strict conduct towards his pupils and afford spiritual help to them by teaching, by putting questions to them, by exhortation and by instruction. If the preceptor had an alms-bowl and the pupils did not, the preceptor should see that his pupils got them. The preceptor should serve the pupils during the period of the latter's illness.

In this way we find that the relation between the teacher and the student in the monastery was filial in character; they were united together with mutual reverence, confidence and affection. The teacher was to teach the student the rules of etiquette and discipline, to draw his particular attention to the vow of chastity, poverty and abstinence from pleasure and to help him in his intellectual and spiritual progress by suitable discourses and lessons in the mornings and afternoons. He was also to help him in getting food and robes and even to nurse him if he was sick. This relationship was inaugurated by a religious ceremony called Pabbajjā and Upasampadā, and was not like the present system of admission of a pupil to the register of a school by payment of the prescribed fee. The pupil became a member of the monastery and was treated by the teacher in every way as his son. The constant and intimate association between the teacher and the taught was a very vital factor in the educational process of the monastery. The pupil was thus able to imbibe the inward method of the teacher. The duty of the pupil in doing the personal work of the teacher had its own educative value. This had the effect of training the pupil in self-help and the dignity of labour and service to his fellow-

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[1] Translated into English by Childers in the Contemporary Review, Feb. 1876. *cf.*, Das, *The Educational System of the Ancient Hindus*, p. 158.
[2] *S.B.E.*, vol. x, pt. ii, p. 51.
[3] *ibid.*, vol. xiii, pp. 154-63.
[4] *ibid.*, pp. 163-64.

students were inculcated in him. The outdoor life and robust physical exercise which their duties involved were fruitful in every way.

Even begging had its educational value. It was begging not in the sense as the present beggars do. It was an institution in itself and elaborate rules had been laid down for this. It produced in the pupil a spirit of humility and renunciation. The daily duty of begging makes the ego less and less assertive and with it all unruly desires and passions. Thus is assured a greater balance of the inner life. It also makes the pupil realise how unattached he is to any ties.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS :—We get a fairly good idea of the administration of the Nālandā and the Vikramaśilā Universities (which were typical of their own) from the accounts of foreign travellers and Tibetan manuscripts respectively. The whole establishment used to be in charge of a famous abbot (Bhikshu). He was usually elected by the members of the Saṁgha. Character, scholarship and seniority were the factors usually taken into consideration. Sometimes, the Head of the institution was nominated by the king of the country. In the ninth century A.D. a monk scholar from Jalalabad, who was on a pilgrimage to Bihar, was appointed Principal of the University of Nālandā by king Devapāla.[1] This shows that there existed international cultural co-operation.

We can get from Tāranātha,[2] a detailed account of the management of the Vikramaśilā University. The Head of the University used to be assisted by two councils, one academic and the other administrative. The academic council consisting of eminent teachers used to regulate admissions, determine courses and assign work to different teachers. It is further stated that this council of Vikramaśilā also administered the affairs of Nālandā. If we accept his statement it must be admitted that a spirit of co-operation prevailed between these sister Universities. Both were directly under king Dharmapāla who might have asked the academic council of the new University to watch over the older University. Sometimes we find men like Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna and Abhyākara Gupta working in both the Universities. We, however, have no definite information whether the affairs of the Nālandā University were later on conducted under the direction of the Paṇḍitas of Vikramaśilā.

The administrative council was in charge of the general administration. Construction and repairs of buildings, distribution of food, clothes and medicine, allotment of rooms in hostels[3] and assignment of monastic work fell within its purview.

Above all, the huge establishment of the Nālandā University must have employed a large staff to look after the management of the villages and the lands given as endowments to the institution. In this direction, the University

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[1] *I.A.*, xvii, p. 307.
[2] Bose, *Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities*, pp. 36-38.
[3] I-Tsing has also referred to it. Supra, pp. 36, 46.

had to take steps to realise the revenues of the villages whose number was about two hundred during the time of I-Tsing.[1] This work must have been fairly extensive and complicated. The institution also took active interest in the direction of agriculture. The cultivable lands were leased out on suitable terms and sometimes the monastery got them cultivated by its own staff and implements, and stored the grain for the free boarding of the monks. All these were managed by the senior monks.

UNIVERSITIES AS RADIATING CENTRES OF CULTURE FOR THE COUNTRY AND OUTSIDE :—We have already seen that the Buddhist Universities of Bihar had attained great reputation because of the high standard of teaching and the unimpeachable discipline and organisation prevalent there. These Universities not only imparted education in different subjects and stimulated discussion and research, but also took active part in the spread of Buddhism and Buddhist philosophical schools in the country. These Buddhist Universities (located in Bihar) had in fact become the cultural centres of India due to their high standard of learning. These institutions represented the country as a whole because they had students and teachers from all over the country. For example, at Nālandā University Āsaṅga and Vasubandhu were from Peshawar,[2] Dinnāga hailed from the south[3] while the scholars, Guṇamati and Sthiramati, from Valabhi.[4] Dharmapāla also hailed from the south, and was a native of Kañchīpura.[5] Also majority of the scholars of Vikramaśilā were from different parts of India. For example, Jetāri was a native of Varendra,[6] Ratnavajra was from Kashmir,[7] Vāgīśvara hailed from Banaras,[8] and thus most of these scholars who were natives of different and distant parts of India flocked to the Nālandā and the Vikramaśilā Universities to complete their studies and thus built up the reputation of these places as seats of learning by their own contributions to knowledge. There were no provincial or religious restrictions. So even in these matters the foreign scholars may have been able to get a fairly good idea of the culture of the country in these institutions which served as a centre for cultural education as well.

Their fame of learning also attracted a large number of foreign scholars, who came here in search of learning. This movement began with Fa-Hien who came here in the company of scholars like Hwuy-king, Tao-Ching, Hwuy-ying, and Hwuy-Wei in the beginning of the fifth century A.D., and continued under the stimulating success attending the missions of Yuan Chwang and I-Tsing. We have references to an early Chinese mission in Magadha on whose request Paramārtha was sent to China by the king of Magadha, where

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[1] Supra, p. 36.
[2] Watters, i, p. 210.
[3] *ibid.*, ii, p. 212.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 108-9.
[5] *ibid.*, ii, p. 226.
[6] Vidyabhusana, *History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 136.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 139.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 151.

he undertook the translation into Chinese of the manuscripts which he had brought with him.[1] We learn from I-Tsing[2] that, between Yuan Chwang's and his own visit in the interval of about forty years, as many as fifty-six foreign scholars visited India from China and Korea, most of whom came to Nālandā for study. They came through the Northern route (by land) as well as the Southern route (by sea). Some of those who came through the Northern route are :

Hiuan Chos[3]—He came to India through Tibet. He first stayed at Jalandhara where he studied Sanskrit, the Buddhist Sūtras and the Vinaya, and then proceeded to Nālandā for higher studies where he stayed for three years. Here he saw another fellow-Chinese student named Shinkwong and a scholar from Ceylon. In 664 A.D. he was seen by I-Tsing at Nālandā.

Tao-Hi[4]—He came to Nālandā to study Mahāyāna. He was called Śrīdeva in Sanskrit. I-Tsing did not meet him but saw his chamber.[5]

Āryavarma (of Korea)[6]—He came to Nālandā in 638 A.D. and studied the Vinaya and Abhidharma and copied many Sūtras. He died at Nālandā at the age of seventy.

Hwui-yieh (of Korea)[7]—He also came to Nālandā in 638 A.D. and was a Doctor of Law. He stayed there for long and died at the age of sixty. I-Tsing saw some of his manuscripts at Nālandā.

Taou-sing[8]—Called in Sanskrit Chandradeva, he was a Doctor of Law. He came to India in 649 A.D. and visited Nālandā, where he was much honoured by the king on account of his youth.

Bodhidharma (*Tukhāra*)[9]—He first went to China and from there he came to India. I-Tsing mentions that he met him at Nālandā. From Nālandā he went to Northern India and died at the age of fifty.

Among the pilgrims who came to Nālandā by the Southern route (by sea), these may be noted :

Tang—also known as 'Lamp'[10] came to India by sea, landed at Tāmralipti, studied and perfected himself in Sanskrit and proceeded to Nālandā.

Taou-Lin[11]—His Sanskrit name was Śīlaprabhā. He first landed at Tāmralipti and then went to Nālandā. Here he studied Kośa. After a year or two, he proceeded to the Vulture Peak, near Rājgir.

Wou-King[12]—He came to Nālandā and studied Yoga, Kośa and other works, and died at Nālandā.

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[1] J.R.A.S., 1905, p. 33.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 556.
[3] *ibid.*, pp. 563-64.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 564.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *ibid.*, p. 565.
[7] *ibid.*
[8] *ibid.*, p. 566.
[9] *ibid.*
[10] *ibid.*, pp. 558-59.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 559.
[12] *ibid.*, p. 561.

I-Tsing himself came to India by the Southern sea route. He stayed at Nālandā for some time. After him, some more students must have come to Bihar in search of knowledge. Unfortunately, we have no adequate records of those visitors. Bagchi writes,[1] "A number of Chinese monks came to India between A.D. 950 and 1039. Their names have been preserved in the Buddhist Encyclopaedia, the Fo-tsu-t'ong-Ki, but no detailed account of their travels is available. They came to India as mere pilgrims to the holy places."

We know of one early traveller from Tibet who came to India and studied at Nālandā. The circumstances under which he came there are as follows :—"The King of Tibet, Srong-tsan-gampo was very anxious to introduce the art of writing into Tibet. He sent several young men to India but they returned back on account of difficulties on the way. Thereafter, Thonmi, the son of Anul, a brave, talented minister of the king, undertook to visit India for the purpose of studying the Indian languages. The king furnished him with a large quantity of gold to enable him to make presents to the Indian princes and professors of Sanskrit learning. He travelled southward to India and hearing of the fame of a Brāhmaṇa named Lipidatta noted for proficiency in the art of writing, he went to him. Having finished his education under Lipidatta, he proceeded to the great monastery of Śri Nālandā and having placed himself under the care of Āchārya Devavid Simha, he studied the sacred literature of the Brāhmaṇas and the Buddhists."[2] It is said that Yuan Chwang came to Nālandā just at the time when the Tibetan scholar was staying there.[3] Thonmi after thoroughly studying the Indian alphabet and Sanskrit language returned to Tibet and created the thirty letters of Tibetan alphabet from Indian alphabet.[4] Soon after, Buddhist monasteries began to be set up in Tibet and Buddhism made good progress. But during the reign of Khri Sron Ide-btsan, the minister M-Zaṅ persecuted Buddhism. However, Buddhism was re-established in Tibet by Śāntarakshita. gSal-snaṅ, the Master of the Palace of the Tibetan King met Śāntarakshita in Nepal and went to Bodh-Gayā. On his return to Tibet he informed the king of the willingness of Śāntarakshita to come over to Tibet to re-establish the doctrine.[5]

We have on record another Tibetan monk Nag-tsho[6] who was deputed to Vikramaśilā by his king for the purpose of inducing its great scholar, Atiśa, to come to Tibet and organise Buddhist preachings in that country. After his arrival at the monastery in the night, he heard prayers in Tibetan and he was taken by a Tibetan monk to the Tibetan House meant for the residence of the students from that country. There he met a senior Tibetan monk,

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[1] Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 78-79. Five Chinese inscriptions have been found in Bodh-Gayā. The first of these belongs to the end of the 10th century A.D. Rest are later, the last belonging to 1039 A.D. (*ibid.*, p. 79).

[2] Das, *Indian Pundits in the Land of Snow*, pp. 47-48.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 39.

[5] *ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

[6] J.B.T.S., 1893, pt. i., p. 1, ff. *cf.* Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, pp. 674-75.

Gyat-son. This shows that Vikramaśilā was a place where a large number of Tibetan monks were studying and for whom separate residential arrangements had been made.

Later Brog-mi and sTag-Lo-gZon-nu brtson-'grus were sent to India. They had studied a little of the Vivarta script (Vartula script, then in vogue in India), and in Nepal they studied Sanskrit language under Śāntibhadra a disciple of Śāntipā. Then they proceeded to interview Śāntipā, one of the six gate-keepers (Paṇḍitas) of Vikramaśilā and heard from him the exposition of Vinaya. They stayed with Śāntipā for eight years, and then proceeded to East India where they were initiated into the Vajrayāna of Virūpā's conception by Prajña-Indraruchi who belonged to the school of Virūpā. These Tibetan scholars stayed in India and Nepal for thirteen years and then returned to Tibet.[1] One of the scholars Brog-mi made many more trips to India. He especially spread the Doctrine in Tibet by propagating the great commentaries, rites and practices of Yoga Tantra.[2] His disciple Mar-pa also proceeded to India.[3] A Tibetan scholar rMa Lo-tsā-ba also came to India and studied under Abhayākaragupta.[4] Khon-phu-ba, the Tibetan Tantric woman Siddha Ma-gcig's brother, also came to India via Nepal. He came to Vajrāsana and met the great teacher Ka-so-ri-pa who taught him the Sādhana of the name of Tārā.[5] At Vikramaśilā he met Dānaśrī. At Nālandā he met the nephew of Ratnavajra.[6] Long before him the Tibetan Mar-pa Do-pa had visited India. In Tirhut (North Bihar) he had met Nā-ro-pa who had been eagerly welcomed by large crowds. Later Mar-pa proceeded to Magadha.[7] Before Mar-pa Do-pa, Mar-pa Lho-brag-pa had visited Nā-ro-pa in Phulhari in the vicinity of Nālandā. He was conducted by the Nepalese Bond-pā to Pushpahari (Phullahari-Phul-la-ha-ri). Mar-pa Lho-brag-pa received instructions from Nā-ro-pa who exposed to him the Pradīpodayatananāma-ṭīkā and completely initiated the Tibetan scholar into the cycle of Mahāmāyā together with its secret preceptor.[8] Nā-ro-pa's system was also very popular in Tibet.

Thus we find that these Buddhist Universities became international centres of learning. Close association of foreign scholars with local students and teachers must have been of very great help in understanding each other's culture.

The epigraphic record[9] further establishes the fact that Nālandā had contacts with Indonesian countries like Java and Sumatra. This fact is also

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[1] *The Blue Annals*, i, pp. 205-6.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 209.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 208.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 219—A large number of Tibetan scholars visited Bihar after the arrival of Atiśa in Tibet. Their records are preserved in Tibetan Annals which place them later than 1000 A.D.; hence they are not treated here in detail.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 228.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 229.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 383.
[8] *ibid.*, ii, p. 400.
[9] *E.I.*, xvii, p. 310.

corroborated by a great similarity between the art of Nālandā and that of Java, although it is still a matter of severe controversy as to whether the Nālandā art influenced the Javanese art or vice versa. Keeping in view the cultural influence of Nālandā upon other countries like China, Korea, Ceylon and Tibet, it may be assumed that Nālandā may have influenced the art of the Malaya Archipelago. In his book the 'The Bronzes of Nālandā and Hindu Javanese Art', Kempers, after a critical study of a mass of examples of the art of both Nālandā and Java, concludes that Nālandā exercised its cultural influence over the Archipelago. It is recorded that Bālaputradeva, the king of Yavadvīpa, erected a monastery at Nālandā, because of high respect for the place. His generosity is further attested to by the fact that he induced his friend, king Devapāla, to make a grant of five villages towards the maintenance of this new monastery and the expenses for adding to its library manuscripts copied for the purpose.[1]

The work of the Buddhist Universities was not confined to the teaching of students (both from the country and outside) who were within its precincts. They sent out scholars and preachers to other countries like Tibet, China and Ceylon. These scholars propagated Buddhism, established monasteries, spread the knowledge of Sanskrit language and translated Sanskrit books into the local languages. Thus these scholars were the active agents in the spread of Indian religion and culture in the far off countries, triumphing over the hazards of difficult climates and paths. Work in this direction had already been initiated by scholars like Kumārajiva and Guṇavarman even before Nālandā started developing into a University. Later on a large number of scholars from Nālandā as well as from Vikramaśilā went to foreign countries to preach the message of Lord Buddha. It was they who contributed largely to the building up of the Greater India beyond the Indian sub-continent. The Tibetan Tripiṭaka mentions the contributions made by the books and scholars of Nālandā in building up the culture and civilisation of the country.

Among the scholars who went to Tibet from Nālandā were Śāntarakshita and Padmasambhava.[2] They were specially invited by the king of Tibet, Khri-sron-deu-tsan (728-786 A.D.) to re-establish the Buddhist doctrine. Śāntarakshita was in Nepal when a Tibetan minister met him and requested him to come to Tibet. The invitation was formally extended to him by king's special courtiers, and Śāntarakshita came and stayed in Lhasa. Unfortunately there were natural calamities in the form of storm, thunder and lightning and loss of harvest. This was interpreted as anger of the evil gods against the arrival of Śāntarakshita who went back to Nepal, and on whose suggestion Padmasambhava (who also happened to be in Nepal then) was invited by the king of Tibet. Padmasambhava silenced all critics, triumphed over the evil gods and founded the great Vihāra of bSam-Yas. Later Śāntarakshita came back to Tibet. As a result of the work of Padmasambhava and Śāntarakshita Buddhism in Tibet was re-established in full grace and glory, and later Dīpaṅ-

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[1] *E.I.*, xvii, p. 310.
[2] Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 31.

kara used to say : "Even in India there did not exist a Doctrine, such as existed in Tibet in those days."[1] In Tibet Śāntarakshita and Padmasambhava became involved in a religious controversy with the Chinese Mahāyānist scholar, Hwa-Shang, whom they were unable to defeat, and so advised the king of Tibet to send for Kamalaśīla, the famous Professor of Tantra at Nālandā. Kamalaśīla vanquished his opponent before the assembled court. Thereupon the Chinese scholar was asked by the king to leave Tibet.[2]

Śāntarakshita and Padmasambhava are regarded as the pioneers in the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet. Śāntarakshita was appointed as the first abbot of a Buddhist monastery which was constructed at the instance of both himself and Padmasambhava on the model of the famous Oddaṇṭapurī Vihāra in 749 A.D. He worked in this office for thirteen years and died in 762 A.D.[3]

Besides the above mentioned scholars and teachers who went to Tibet from Nālandā, a few others from Nālandā or other parts of Bihar and Bengal (Eastern India) were invited from time to time. Works of scholars such as Āryadeva, Śīlabhadra, Dharmapāla, Chandragomin, Sthiramati, found in Tibetan manuscripts, are known.[4]

Dharmapāla an East Indian Paṇḍita had many disciples such as Sādhupāla, Guṇapāla, Prajñāpāla and others. Their lineage is called the 'Upper Vinaya.'[5] The great Paṇḍita Jñānaśrī came to Tibet and also many others who made numerous excellent translations (of texts).[6] Jñānaśrī was one of the Dvārapaṇḍitas of Vikramaśilā.[7] Ratnavajra, another Dvārapaṇḍita (Gatekeeper) of Vikramaśilā went to Tibet and translated a large number of Buddhist works there.[8] But the most distinguished scholar of the Vikramaśilā University who went to Tibet on the invitation of the king of Tibet was Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna. He was born in a royal family in the city of Vikramapura in the great kingdom, called So-hor by the Indians and Za-hor by the Tibetans. Sa-hor has been generally identified with Sabhar in East Bengal.[9] But Rahula Sankrityayana, a noted Indian scholar of Tibetan language, has suggested that *Sa-hor* should be identified with modern Sabour near Bhagalpur in Bihar.[10] Whatever may be the actual home of Śrī Dīpaṅkara, his education and field of work were largely in Bihar. He was known in his early age as Chandragarbha.[11] He became a pupil of Jetāri, a Paṇḍita of the Vikramaśilā University. He went to Suvarṇadvīpa for Buddhist studies and on his way back visited Ceylon

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[1] *The Blue Annals*, i, pp. 42-44.
[2] Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 31.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 28.
[4] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, pp. 576-78.
[5] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 69.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 70.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 206.
[8] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 590.
[9] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 674.
[10] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, pp. 369-72.
[11] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 241.

(Tāmradvīpa).[1] Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna attended on Avadhūtīpā for seven years, and took part in Tāntric feats in the company of Dākiṇīs in the country of Oḍḍiyāna (N. W. F.). Thus he was being established in the excellent method of Vajrayāna, and accepted ordination from Śīlarakshita, the Sthavira of the Mahāsāṅghika school at the Mahāvihāra at Vajrāsana.[2] For two years Dīpaṅkara at Oddaṇṭapurī heard Mahāvibhāsha from Āchārya Dharmarakshita. He also received instruction from Jetāri, Jñānaśrī, Krishṇapāda, Prajñābhadra, Ratnākaraśānti etc.[3] Nayapāla appointed him as a high-priest of the Vikramaśilā University.[4] As a Mahāsthavira of the monastic college of Vikramaśilā, his great fame encompassed all quarters of the world.[5] When Ye ses-'od, the king of Tibet, was captured in a fight against Gar-Log (Qarluq) and a good quantity of gold was collected as his ransom, the king (Ye ses-'od) advised his nephew to spend that money by inviting Paṇḍitas to establish the Doctrine. In Tibet many wrongful practices prevailed and many Paṇḍitas were invited, but their work did not benefit the whole of Tibet, and so Nag-tsho who had been to India for studies before was sent by the king to invite the venerable Atiśa to Tibet. Nag-tsho diverting an attack by brigands because of his carrying with him much gold, reached Vikramaśilā at night. He was next day conducted before Atiśa by the elder Tibetan monk Gya-Tson, who repeated the invitation of the king of Tibet to Atiśa. The Buddhist savant had already refused previous invitation from Tibet and so was now determined to visit Tibet. The Master consulted his tutelary deity and a Yoginī at Vajrāsana, and both advised him to visit Tibet but they also told him that his life thereby would be shortened by twenty years. Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna's high idealism and very deep regard and conviction for high faith are proved by the fact that in spite of the warning of the shortening of his own life by not less than twenty years by his going to Tibet, he decided to go, for in his opinion, "If benefit for the Doctrine and living beings were to arise then the shortening of one's own life did not matter."[6] A nobler example of self-sacrifice for the cause of the Faith and the happiness of the living beings is rarely met with. It was this missionary zeal which caused streams of Indian scholars to tread terribly difficult routes to Tibet and other parts of Central Asia and China. They felt the call of duty and no sacrifice was considered too high for it. Ultimately Śīlākara, the abbot of Vikramaśilā, grudgingly consented to Atiśa's departure for Tibet. Atiśa went to Vajrāsana on a pilgrimage, and left India in 1040 A.D. and spent a year in Nepal. He then arrived in Tibet

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[1] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 674.

[2] *The Blue Annals*, i, pp. 242-43. Majumdar has on the authority of other Tibetan sources shown that Śīlarakshita belonged to Oddaṇṭapurī Vihāra and that Śrī Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna had received ordination at the age of 19.—*History of Bengal*, i, p. 674.

[3] *ibid.*, pp. 243-44.

[4] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 674.

[5] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 244.

[6] *ibid.*, pp. 244-46.

in 1042 A.D. Atiśa reformed the Buddhist Doctrine in Tibet, touring different parts of the land and preached the Faith to the people and the monks. The gist of his high teaching was: "The sufferings of this Phenomenal world are difficult to bear. One should labour for the benefit of all living beings."[1] The one result of the Indian Buddhist scholars' efforts in Tibet was that there were large numbers of monks in Central Tibet. When the Tibetan scholar Brom spoke to Atiśa about the many Vihāras and thousands of monks in Lha-Sa, bSam-Yas and other monasteries of Central Tibet, Atiśa remarked, "Such a great number of brahmacharins does not exist even in India. There must be many arhats also."[2] Atiśa decided to prolong his stay in Tibet and not to return to India after three years had expired as promised to the Vikramaśilā's abbot, Śīlākara. Atiśa proceeded to bSam-Yas monastery and seeing many manuscripts not found in India, he remarked: "It seems the Doctrine had first spread in Tibet, even more than in India."[3] What an eloquent tribute this is to previous Indian missionaries like Padmasambhava and others. Atiśa in Tibet did not forget Vikramaśilā and the wealth which Atiśa had amassed while preaching in Tibet, was despatched on three occasions to India for offering to the teacher and the monastic community of Vikramaśilā.[4] Tirelessly Atiśa continued to visit monastery after monastery in Tibet, giving instructions to thousands of individuals, till ultimately his health broke down and he passed away in Tibet in 1054 A.D.[5]

CENTRAL ASIA AND CHINA VISITED BY MANY INDIAN BUDDHIST SCHOLARS :—Scholars from Bihar played a big part in the propagation of Buddhism in Central Asia and China. Nālandā from the beginning of the 7th century began to play the same role in propagation of Buddhism in China as Kashmir in the earlier period.[6]

Dharmakshema, a Buddhist scholar of Magadha had come to China and had brought an incomplete copy of the Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra to China in the 5th century A.D. He came to Khotan in search of the complete copy of the Sūtra in 412-13 A.D. and found there the second part of the Text, which he brought to China.[7] Later he started again for Khotan for the last part of the Text, but was murdered on the way.[8] This shows the enthusiasm of Indian missionaries in China and Central Asia.

Paramārtha, who reached China in 546 A.D., belonged to Ujjain but he had come to settle down in Pāṭaliputra. Paramārtha went to China in response to a request of the Chinese emperor to the king of Magadha for a Buddhist scholar. He left for China by sea-route and took with him a large

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[1] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 250.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 254.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 257.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 259.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 261.
[6] Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 49.
[7] Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, p. 60.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 110.

collection of Buddhist texts. Seventy translated works by him are still available. He died in China in 569 A.D.[1]

Prabhākaraṁitra was born in a royal family of Central India and settled in the monastery of Nālandā and studied under Śīlabhadra. He became a professor of Abhidharma at Nālandā. He started for China by the Northern route. On his way to China he and his ten disciples had come to Tokharistan which was under the Turkish rule. The party arrived at Kunduz (a temporary residence of the Turkish chief) in about 620 A.D. and taught Buddhism there. With the permission of the Kagan Chief, Prabhākaramitra left for China in 626 A.D.[2] and reached the capital in 627 A.D. At the request of the Chinese emperor, he translated numerous Sanskrit books into Chinese, but Chinese Confucianists felt bitter against him and the emperor lost interest in him. He died broken-hearted in 633 A.D.[3]

A Paṇḍita of Nālandā named Subhākara Singh[4] went to China on invitation and presented a large collection of Sanskrit manuscripts to the Chinese emperor. He settled down in China and translated a few works, and died there in 735 A.D.[5]

Vajrabodhi belonging to the royal family of Central India, studied in Nālandā for eleven years and then went to Ceylon from where he went to China in 720 A.D. He translated a number of mystic Buddhist works into Chinese between 723-30 A.D. and introduced Tāntricism in China.[6] Another Buddhist monk Dharmachandra of Magadha had gone to Kucha, and from there at the invitation of the Chinese ambassador, to China in 730 A.D. He completed his work in China in 741 A.D. and on his return journey to India passed through Kashgar and ultimately settled in Khotan where he died in 741 A.D.[7]

In the tenth century A.D. we find Dharmadeva, another Nālandā scholar, taking up work in China as member and later head of the Imperial Bureau of Translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese under the Sung dynasty in 982 A.D.[8] He translated forty-six works into Chinese, which were mostly on Tantras and Dharaṇīs. He also translated into Chinese the popular Mahāyāna work Sukhāvatīvyūha.[9]

Pu-to-ki-to (Budhakīrti), who is described in China as 'Sramaṇa of the temple of Nālandā of Central India', is stated to have given to the Emperor

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[1] Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 42-44.
[2] Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, p. 36.
[3] Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 50.
[4] Bose, *The Indian Teachers in China*, pp. 58-59.
[5] Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 53.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 54.
[7] Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, p. 48; Khotan, according to tradition was visited by Aśoka. His son Kustana and his minister Yaśa helped in the foundation of the Indian Kingdom in Khotan (*ibid.*, p. 50).
[8] Bose, *The Indian Teachers in China*, pp. 130-35.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 135.

of China a present of some relics of the Buddha and some Sanskrit texts.[1] He came to China in 989 A.D. from Nālandā.[2]

Thus it is clear that the Buddhist Universities (of Bihar) were not only the centres of education, but they were also important centres for the propagation of Indian culture and art in other countries.

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[1] Bose, *The Indian Teachers in China*, p. 140.
[2] Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 56.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS CONDITION

INDIA has been a country where different religions and sects have flourished and reacted upon one another, with much of mutual give and take, but generally without any violent conflicts. India's toleration and catholocity did not only shelter all faiths but also contributed to the worship of many deities whose forms were the results of cult amalgams. In maintaining this wholesome atmosphere, besides the healthy religious outlook of the people and of religious teachers, the religious policy of kings in ancient India in general has contributed in no small measure. This is true of the religious history of our period. We find that in Bihar all the important religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishṇavism, Śaivism, etc. flourished during the period under review without any conflict with one another; and the most admirable features of the religious life of this period are the tolerant policy of the kings who ruled over the land and the liberal attitude of the people who, though strong in their loyalty to their respective faiths, seldom descended to physical clashes and vulgar abuses. The tolerant and rather positive policy of the kings to help all religions and the reasonable attitude of the people about religious propaganda contributed to the peaceful development of all religions side by side.

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

Most of the Gupta kings who ruled over the State were patrons of Brāhmaṇism. Samudra Gupta upheld and followed the dictates of the Hindu Śāstras. He performed the 'Aśvamedha Sacrifice',[1] and even claimed to have revived it. The Allahabad Praśasti is silent about it because the ceremony was performed after it was incised and all the conquests were achieved. His Aśvamedha type of coins[2] confirms the statement in the epigraphs of his descendants.[3]

Samudra Gupta was a follower of Vaishṇavism which is proved by his coins which, on the obverse bear the Garuḍa standard, an emblem of Vishṇu. The Allahabad pillar Inscription[4] refers to the "Garutmad-aṅka" (Garuḍa seal) of Samudra Gupta and represents him actually as the God Vishṇu in human form. Samudra Gupta is described as equal to the four Lokapālas, viz., Kubera, Varuṇa, Indra and Yama, and also as 'one who is mortal only in celebrating the observances of mankind, but is otherwise a god dwelling on the earth.' This no doubt refers to the conception of a divine King similar to that

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[1] Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. iii, p. 257.
[2] Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasty*, pl. v. 9-14.
[3] Fleet, op. cit., p. 51.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 8.

found in the 'Manusmriti' (vii. 4-8). But more important is another passage of the same record in which Samudra Gupta is represented as identical with the "Achintya-Purusha" or Inscrutable Being, i.e., Vishṇu, who is the cause of the prosperity of the pious and destruction of the wicked. It is quite clear that the passage is an echo of a verse of the Gītā (iv. 8) which refers to the descent of God on the earth, in physical form, for protecting the pious and destroying the sinners. In the Gayā and the Nālandā Copperplate Inscriptions he is referred to as "Paramabhāgavata", the most ardent devotee of Vishṇu.[1] It is to be noted that in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudra Gupta, there is a reference to the story of advent of the Gaṅgā on the earth, and Lord Śiva is mentioned as Paśupati.[2] Samudra Gupta showed his liberal attitude not only towards Hindu sects other than his Vaishṇava faith, but also towards Buddhism, as is evident from the statement of Wang-Hiuen T'se.[3] It is stated that Samudra Gupta's contemporary in Ceylon, King Śrī Meghavarṇa, an ardent Buddhist, sent two monks to Magadha to pay homage to the Diamond Throne at Bodh-Gayā. The strangers met with scant hospitality and informed their king about their sad experiences. Thereupon the king of Ceylon sent a mission to Samudra Gupta's court with expensive presents and with a request for permission to erect a monastery. The envoys were received with great honour and Samudra Gupta granted their king's request. The embassy returned home and the king of Ceylon pushed forth with his plan to build the monastery. The purpose, solemnly recorded on a copperplate, was carried out by the erection of the splendid convent to the north of the Holy tree. There was also installed in the convent a statue of the Buddha cast in gold and silver and studded with gems.[4] This old tradition is also described by Hiuen-Tsiang[5] who visited Magadha between 637 and 640 A.D. in a slightly different manner. The visit to Bodh-Gayā by foreigners clearly indicates that Bihar was an important international centre of Buddhism even though it was under the rule of a Vaishṇava king.

Chandra Gupta II, Samudra Gupta's son and successor, was also a Vaishṇava. His coins represent Goddess Lakshmī and Garuḍa, the vehicle of Vishṇu. The Udayagiri Cave which was excavated during his reign is purely a Vaishṇava one.[6] He is referred to as 'Paramabhāgavata' in the Mathurā Stone Inscription.[7] Even though a Vaishṇava, he was not hostile to any

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[1] These inscriptions have been taken to be forgeries but even the forgeries are quite ancient ones, not later than 7th century A.D. It is quite possible that the forgers used the title 'Paramabhāgavata' for Samudra Gupta in imitation of the title of his son Chandragupta Vikramāditya who is the first Paramabhāgavata of the Gupta kings as known from the official contemporary inscriptions and coins. It is important to note that Samudra Gupta is known as 'Paramabhāgavata' in genuine official Gupta epigraphs.

[2] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, 257.

[3] *I.A.*, xxxi, p. 194; Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 272.

[4] *I.A.*, xxxi, p. 192.

[5] Beal, *Records*, ii, pp.133-35.

[6] Fleet, *C.I.I.* iii, p. 23.

[7] *ibid.*, p. 27.

other sect. The Śaiva faith was also fairly popular as is borne out by the Udayagiri Cave Inscription[1] of the time of Chandra Gupta II, which mentions the excavation of the cave for the devotees of God Śambhu or Śiva. The inscription clearly mentions that the emperor Chandra Gupta II himself accompanied the donor of the Cave to Udayagiri on the occasion of the donation-ceremony. The Mathurā Pillar Inscription[2] belonging to his period and lying in his dominion describes the installation of a couple of Śivaliṅgas, styled Kapileśvara and Upamiteśvara after the names of two previous teachers by an individual Uditāchārya in a hall containing other statues. Not only Vaishṇavism and Śaivism but also Buddhism flourished during his reign and received royal protection. The Sanchi Stone Inscription[3] of this emperor dated 412 A.D. shows that there was a great Vihāra at Kākanādaboṭa (Sanchi) where an official of Chandra Gupta II named Āmrakāradava made an endowment of 25 dināras, the interest of which was to be used in providing for the maintenance of five Bhikshus and the burning of a lamp in the Ratnagriha. This action of an officer of Chandra Gupta II is a positive proof of the tolerant character of Chandra Gupta II's Government. This inscription also informs us that the Bhikshus were supported mostly by endowments from the people. It is also confirmed by Fa-Hien's account.[4] He had noticed three monasteries in the neighbourhood of the Bo-tree (Bodh-Gayā) in all of which monks were accommodated. The local lay-worshippers supplied them with all that they needed.

An inscription[5] from Bodh-Gayā mentions the gift of an image of the Buddha by two Śākya-bhikshus, Dharma Gupta and Damashtrasena. Fa-Hien[6] refers to two monasteries (one of Mahāyāna and another of Hīnayāna) in Pāṭaliputra, the imperial city of the devoted Vaishṇava emperor, Chandra Gupta II. The Buddhist monks used to celebrate their annual procession of the images of the Buddha on the occasion of his birthday, which was attended by a large number of people.[7] They not only attended the procession, but also took active part in it. These facts go to establish that during the Gupta period, the atmosphere of toleration prevailed throughout among the ruling classes and the common people who were free to hold their religious beliefs and perform religious ceremonies as they desired.

Kumāra Gupta I, the son and successor of Chandra Gupta II, was also a follower of Vaishṇava religion like his predecessors. The two Gaḍhwa Stone Inscriptions[8] of Kumāra Gupta I open with an invocation to Vishṇu and style the emperor as 'Paramabhāgavata.' His coins too bear further testimony

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 35.
[2] *E.I.*, xxi, p. 1.
[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 32.
[4] Legge, p. 89.
[5] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 282.
[6] Legge, p. 78. The recent excavations at Kumrahar have brought to light the foundation walls of these monasteries.
[7] Legge, p. 79.
[8] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, pp. 40-41.

to his adherence to the Vaishṇava faith. His Archer type of coins[1] reveals Garuḍa and Goddess Lakshmī while on his silver coins[2] he is often called 'Paramabhāgavata.' In the Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription[3] he is clearly mentioned as 'Paramabhāgavata.'

Though he is a 'Paramabhāgavata,' Kumāra Gupta's personal deity appears to be Kārttikeya as is suggested by the representation of the peaccck on some of his coins[4] and the epithet 'Mahendra' or 'Mahendrāditya.' He may have been attracted to this deity by accident by his name Kumāra which is also the name of Kārttikeya. In this connection it may be observed that the epithet 'Paramabhāgavata' applied to the Gupta kings had become practically so formal that Vaishṇavism was probably taken to be the religion of the family, but it did not prevent an individual Gupta king from being personally devoted to any other deity as his 'Ishṭa-deva.' Kumāra Gupta I's 'Ishṭa-deva' appears to have been Kārttikeya, but he is still a 'Paramabhāgavata.' Similarly Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya is a Buddhist according to Yuan Chwang[5] and the Buddhist work Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa,[6] but he is still styled as 'Paramabhāgavata' in his own inscription.[7]

Buddhism appears to have continued to flourish in the time of Kumāra Gupta I. From the Man Kuwar Image Inscription[8] we learn that Buddhamitra set up an image of the Buddha in the year 448-49 A.D. Some writers[9] have identified this Buddhamitra with Buddhamitra, the teacher of Vasubandhu. The identification, however, seems very doubtful. But if it is correct, then it shows the possibility of contact between the great Buddhist teacher Buddhamitra and Kumāra Gupta I. It is all the more significant that Kumāra Gupta I (who has been rightly identified with Śakrāditya of Hiuen-Tsiang's account)[10] founded the Nālandā Mahāvihāra, which developed into the most important centre of Buddhist learning. In this connection it may not be out of place to mention that on the 'Apratigha' type of coins,[11] Kumāra Gupta is depicted as a monk. Whether he embraced Buddhism and retired as a monk is very difficult to say. There is no mention of Kumāra Gupta I becoming a Buddhist monk in the accounts of Yuan Chwang, although this traveller does mention Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya's retirement to the Nālandā monastery as a monk.[12]

According to most scholars, Kumāra Gupta I was followed by his son

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[1] Allan, *Cat. of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasty*, pl. xii, nos. 1-12.
[2] *ibid.*, pl. xvi.
[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 50.
[4] Allan, op. cit., pl. xv, nos. 5-14.
[5] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 168.
[6] Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 37.
[7] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 65.
[8] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 47.
[9] I.A., xl, pp. 170-71.
[10] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 168.
[11] J.N.S.I., x, pp. 115-16.
[12] Watters, i, p. 288.

Skanda Gupta.[1] He too was a 'Paramabhāgavata' like his predecessor, as can be ascertained from his silver coins.[2] He installed the image of Śārṅgin[3] and allotted a village for increasing the religious merit of his father. Śārṅgin must have been Vāsudeva-Krishṇa. Skanda Gupta was a devout worshipper of Lakshmī, the goddess of wealth, and considered himself as the chosen favourite of Lakshmī. This is apparent from his 'King and Lakshmī' type of coins[4], which is a singular type of the Gupta coinage. His religious eclecticism is proved by the fact that on one type of his silver coins[5], is represented a bull, the Vāhana of Śiva.

Purū Gupta, the successor of Skanda Gupta, showed interest in Buddhism. He is identified with Vikramāditya who had appointed Vasubandhu as a tutor of his son Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya.[6] But his inclination towards Śaivism gathers more strength in the Bihar Pillar Inscription[7] of the time of Skanda Gupta which mentions the Śaiva-form of worship in its Śākta or Tāntric development. It also refers to the erection of a sacrificial post most probably by some minister whose sister had been espoused by Kumāra Gupta I. This record refers to some deities headed by the God Skanda and by the divine mothers. These may be the Saptamātrikās or the seven mothers generally found together in a group, but here the Mātrikās (mothers) are only six in number.

Purū Gupta was succeeded by Kumāra Gupta II of the Sarnath Inscription.[8] It is difficult to ascertain his personal religion. Though in his Archer type of coins, Lakshmī, the consort of Vishṇu, and Garuḍa are represented as usual, thereby indicating his Vaishṇava faith, the Saranath inscription[8] (which is a Buddhist votive one) certainly bears testimony to his toleration of Buddhism, as in his reign the Buddha's votive image was offered.

Kumāra Gupta II was followed by Buddha Gupta, who was a 'Paramabhāgavata' as is evident from his Nālandā seal.[9] The fourth Damodarpur Copperplate Inscription[10] which belongs to his reign refers to a temple of Kokamukhaswāmi. Sircar[11] regards Kokamukha to be a form of Śiva. Basak[12] took it to be a form of Durgā while Raychaudhuri[13] regards it to be a form of Varāha Incarnation of Vishṇu. In his reign two beautiful votive images of

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[1] Sinha holds that Kumāra Gupta was succeeded by Purū Gupta, *vide*, *The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha*, p. 41.

[2] Allan, op. cit., pp. 119-129, pl. xx, nos. 3-29.

[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 54.

[4] Allan, op. cit., pl. xix, nos. 6-9, pp. 116-17.

[5] *ibid.*, pl. xx, nos. 9-10, pp. 121-22.

[6] J.R.A.S., 1905, p. 35.

[7] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 50; Recently, Sinha has held that the inscription belongs to Purū Gupta or his successor. *vide*, *D.K.M.*, pp. 26-28.

[8] A.S.R., 1914-15, p. 124.

[9] I.H.Q., xx, pp. 119 ff.

[10] *E.I.*, xv, p. 115.

[11] Sircar, *Selected Inscriptions*, vol. i, p. 328.

[12] *E.I.*, xv, p. 115.

[13] B.C. Law Vol. I, p. 88.

the Buddha were installed.[1] His Nālandā seal[2] bears testimony to his patronage of Buddhism by his building a Samghārāma at Nālandā.

His successor, Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya, appears to have embraced Buddhism in later years of his life. He is identified with 'Bala' of "Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa."[3] He is said to have decorated the coast up to the sea with "chaityas, monasteries, gardens, pavilions, bridges and roads and he worshipped the Buddha's images."[3] But it is important to note that in the Nālandā seal[4] he is described as 'Paramabhāgavata' and the seal has the image of Garuḍa. It proves that though he became a Buddhist (probably in later years of his life), he continued to be called 'Paramabhāgavata' in conformity with the practice of his ancestors, and therefore, in his official seal he has the symbol of Garuḍa. The epithet 'Paramabhāgavata' had become almost a part and parcel of the official titles of the Gupta emperors; devotion to Vishṇu had become a royal family religion, and even when some of the Gupta Princes showed strong favour to other deities or religions, they continued the Garuḍa emblem in their official seals and the epithet 'Paramabhāgavata.' Yuan Chwang[5] is very elaborate about Bālāditya's activities and interest in Buddhism. Referring to Mihirakula's extermination of the Buddhist monasteries throughout his dominion Yuan Chwang[6] has stated that Bālādityarājā (Narasimha Gupta), a devout Buddhist, naturally resented the order for the persecution of the Buddhists. Bālāditya decided to resist Mihirakula who invaded his kingdom. In this war Bālāditya was supported by millions of his loyal subjects.[7] This shows that both the king and the people of Bihar took the cause of Buddhism against the tyrant Mihirakula. Had there been any unhealthy and violent rivalry between the existing sects, it was but natural that the aggrieved sect or sects might have helped Mihirakula in his persecution of Buddhism.[8] But the absence of any definite proof makes it clear that religious rivalry was quite absent in this state. Narasimha Gupta was successful in regaining the independence of Magadha and saving Buddhism from utter destruction. According to Yuan Chwang,[9] he built another 'Samghārāma.' It was probably to commemorate his victory over the Hūṇas, that Bālāditya also built a temple where he placed an image of the Buddha.[10] The testimony of the Chinese Scholar is corroborated by the Nālāndā Stone Inscription[11] of the reign of Yaśovarmadeva. It mentions that "Bālāditya, the

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[1] A.S.R., 1914-15, p. 124.
[2] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 64. (pl. viii, a).
[3] Jayaswal, *I.H.I.*, p. 33.
[4] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 65. (pl. viii, b-c).
[5] Watters, i, p. 288.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 289.
[7] Beal, *Records*, i, p. 168.
[8] Buddhists are supposed to have helped Bactrian Greeks (Tarn, *Greeks in India and Bactria*, p. 178), and much later again the ruler of Sindh, because of their dissatisfaction with the indigenous ruling dynasties.
[9] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 168.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 170.
[11] *E.I.*, xx, p. 43.

great king of irresistible valour, after having vanquished all the foes, enjoyed the entire earth, erected, as if with a view to seeing the Kailāsa mountain surpassed, a great and extraordinary temple of the illustrious son of Suddhodana, here at Nālandā." According to Yuan Chwang,[1] after his victory over Mihirakula and the completion of the building of a new monastery and a temple at Nālandā, Bālāditya (Narasimha Gupta) abdicated the throne and became a Buddhist monk.

Among the later Imperial Guptas, Vainya Gupta appears, from the Gunaigarh Copperplate Inscription,[2] to be a follower of Śaivism although we find him granting gifts of land to Buddhist monasteries as well. In the Nālandā[3] seal he is called 'Paramabhāgavata,' a devotee of Vishṇu. His coins[4] have Garuḍa standard on the obverse. It is possible that he might have been a devotee of Śiva but he continued the traditional use of the epithet 'Paramabhāgavata' and the emblem of Garuḍa on the coins. If the identity of Vainya Gupta with Tathāgatarāja[5] (mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim)[6] is accepted, then he built a Saṃghārāma in Nālandā. Discovery of his seals at Nālandā shows his patronage of Buddhist monasteries.

Kumāra Gupta III is known from the Bhitarī and Nālandā seals[7] and also from "Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa."[8] He was succeeded by Vishṇu Gupta, the last king of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. Very little is known about the religious policies of these rulers. Their coins determine their family religion and in a seal from Nālandā,[9] Vishṇu Gupta is styled 'Paramabhāgavata.' The paucity of Buddhist as well as Vaishṇava and Śaiva records of their rule makes it difficult to give a precise account of the religious policy of these rulers. Lack of proper records may be attributed to the unstable conditions in the period after the death of Buddha Gupta. With the close of the Imperial Gupta dynasty and before the rise of Harshavardhana, the history of Magadha is largely a conflict between the later Guptas and the Maukharis and the Gauḍas. It appears that in this war the Maukharis succeeded in making themselves masters of Magadha by defeating Mahāsena Gupta.

The records of the three Maukhari Chiefs of Yajñavarman's line have been found in Nāgārjuni and Barābara Hills.[10] In the Vadāttikā cave, (which is one of the Nāgārjuni Hill caves) king Anantavarman of this dynasty set up an image of Ardhanārīśvara,[11] while in Gopī Cave, he placed an image of Kātyāyanī.[12] The inscription in the Gopī Cave also records that he granted

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 164.
[2] I.H.Q., vi, p. 57.
[3] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 67.
[4] Allan, op. cit., p. 44.
[5] Sinha, *D.K.M.*, p. 100.
[6] Beal's *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 110.
[7] J.A.S.B., lviii, p. 86; M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 66.
[8] Jayaswal, *I.H.I.*, p. 33.
[9] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 66.
[10] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, pp. 221-228.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 225.
[12] *ibid.*, p. 228.

to Pārvatī (mentioned under the name of Bhavānī) a village whose name has been destroyed. A Barābar Hill Cave temple also contains an inscription recording that Anantavarman set up an image of Krishṇa there.[1] These records by ruling Chiefs show that in this period Brāhmaṇism received a great impetus at least in this part of Magadha : Śaivism in particular appears to have been most popular with the Maukhari Chiefs of Magadha, though Anantavarman was equally inclined towards both Śaivism and Vaishṇavism. The clear references to the images of Ardhanārīśvara and Krishṇa are so far the earliest epigraphic notices of the worship of these deities in these forms and names in this part of the country. Mention of Krishṇa's image as object of worship in Magadha is very significant. It is not clear as to whether this line of the Maukharis has any relationship with Maukhari family of Harivarman of Kanauj.[2]

When the Imperial Maukharis of Kanauj conquered Magadha, they continued the traditional religious policy of the rulers of this state. In the Asirgarh seal,[3] Śarvavarman is said to have been a devotee of Maheśvara. This shows that he was a Śaiva. Though Śarvavarman was a Śaiva, it did not prevent him from renewing the grant to the Sun-temple at Deo-Barnārk as is known from the Deo-Barnārk Inscription[4] of Jivita Gupta II. At the same time, it is significant that the Brāhmaṇical Maukhari rulers followed the policy of patronising the famous Nālandā monastery which is suggested by the seals of Śarvavarman and Avantivarman and the latter's son, discovered at Nālandā.[5] As time went on, the Maukharis showed more and more religious catholicity. It is during the reign of the Maukharis in Magadha that Mahānāman of Ceylon constructed a Buddhist temple or Vihāra within the precincts of Bodh-Gayā,[6] in 588-89 A.D. Grahavarman, the son and successor of Avantivarman, was also well disposed towards Buddhism, and Diwākaramitra, a Buddhist monk, was his great friend. And Grahavarman's wife later on embraced Buddhism and even wanted to be a nun.[7]

After the Maukharis, Magadha passed into the hands of Śaśāṅka. His rule over Magadha is characterised by the Chinese pilgrim as a period of vandalism against the Buddhist institution and sacred monuments. He tried to efface the stone foot-prints of the Buddha in Pāṭaliputra.[8] He cut down the Bodhi-tree and destroyed its roots "down to the water and burnt whatever remained."[9] He got the image of the Buddha removed from the Vihāra east of the Bodhi-tree and as a dire consequence of this irreligious act he

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[1] *E.I.*, XX, p. 222.

[2] Piers has suggested that Anantavarman of this line died without any son and Harivarman was a sister's or a brother's son who succeeded him. *Vide*, *Maukharis*, p. 53.

[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 221.

[4] *ibid.*, p. 218.

[5] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 62.

[6] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 274.

[7] Cowell and Thomas, *Harsha-charita*, p. 254.

[8] Watters, ii, p. 92.

[9] Watters, i, p. 115.

perished of a foul disease.[1] Due to Śaśāṅka's persecution of Buddhism the magnificent establishment founded by wealthy Brāhmaṇas at Kuśinagara suffered much, as "the groups of the brethren were all broken up."[2] The state of Buddhism had become so low that Avalokiteśvara advised Harsha to accept the throne to "raise Buddhism from the ruin into which it had been brought by the King of Karṇasuvarṇa."[3] The author of the "Mañju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa" says[4] "Soma (Śaśāṅka) enamcured of the words of the Tīrthakas, will burn that great bridge of religion, as prophesied by former jinas (Buddha)..... and fell all the monasteries, gardens, chaityas.....and he will die of a disease in his mouth." That Śaśāṅka was a Śaiva is clear from his coins,[5] on which we find the bull, the moon and Śiva. On his seal-matrix found in Sasaram in Bihar there is the bull on the upper part of the seal.[6] This is confirmed by the account of Yuan Chwang[7] where we are told that Śaśāṅka tried to remove the image of the Buddha and replace it by that of Śiva in the temple east of the Bodhi-tree.

There is no other authority than the prejudiced accounts of the pilgrim and the "Mañju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa" to confirm Śaśāṅka's acts of vandalism against Buddhism. Of course there may be some element of truth in them. Moreover, the excavations at Nālandā clearly show that the famous monastery suffered destruction many times in its long chequered history. It is quite possible that after the Hūṇas, Śaśāṅka also plundered the famous University of Nālandā.[8] As Allan has rightly concluded, "It is certain, then, that Śaśāṅka was a persecutor of Buddhism, although the Chinese pilgrim may credit him with more than he deserves."[9] But it is fair to bear in mind that while the pilgrim refers to Śaśāṅka's persecution of Buddhism in Magadha, he does not allude to a single instance of such acts of fanaticism in Karṇasuvarṇa, the capital of Śaśāṅka. Yuan Chwang observes that in Karṇasuvarṇa, there were ten Buddhist monasteries and about 2000 brethren, who were all adherents of the 'Sammatiya' school, and he also mentions the magnificent Raktamrittikā (Lo-to-mo-chi) monastery beside the capital.[10] This fact makes it difficult to explain Śaśāṅka's persecution of Buddhists in Magadha, while he appears to have followed the traditional ancient Indian policy of religious toleration in his home-province. Sinha has suggested that the anti-Buddhist policy of Śaśāṅka in Magadha might have been prompted by his suspicion of the loyalty of the powerful Buddhist community, partial to his enemies, the Maukharis and the Vardhanas, because of their leaning towards Buddhism. He observes,[11] "It

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[1] Beal, *Records*, ii, pp. 121-22.
[2] Watters, ii, p. 43.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 343.
[4] Jayaswal, *I.H.I.*, pp. 49-50.
[5] Allan, op. cit., pl. xxiii, No. 14.
[6] Fleet, op. cit., p. 283.
[7] Watters, ii, p. 116.
[8] A.S.R., 1924-25, p. 136; J.B.B.R.A.S. (N.S.), i. 11, p. 216.
[9] Allan, op. cit., p. lxiii.
[10] Watters, ii, p. 191.
[11] Sinha, *D.K.M.*, pp. 259-60.

was probably the expulsion of the pro-Buddhist Maukharis from Magadha by the Brāhmaṇical Gauḍas which made the latter unpopular with the powerful Buddhists of Magadha. The murder of the pro-Buddhist Grahavarman and the Buddhist Rājyavardhana must have made the relation between the Gauḍa ruler and the Buddhists of Magadha still worse. A deadly struggle between the king of Gauḍa and Harsha was imminent, and Śaśāṅka might have suspected some disloyalty on the part of the Buddhists of Magadha." There appears to be considerable force in Sinha's argument.

According to Yuan Chwang,[1] Śaśāṅka was succeeded by Pūrṇavarman in Magadha. He was a Buddhist king. He brought the Bodhi-tree back to life and built round it a stone wall twenty-four feet high.[1] He was responsible for the construction of a copper image of the Buddha, about eighty feet high and housed over a pavilion in six stages.[2] He might have adopted, though we have no positive evidence, the traditional policy of religious toleration as he had come to the throne in a troubled time. He was followed by Harsha in about 638 A.D.[3]

Harsha is described as king of Magadha in documents connected with his embassy to China in 641 A.D.[4] He was a Śaiva by faith, but he was not only tolerant of, but actually devoted to other religious sects. As long as he ruled over Magadha, he showed his inclination towards Buddhism. He is said to have constructed a bronze Vihāra at Nālandā.[5] He became a friend of Yuan Chwang who is lavish in his praises to him. He held a special assembly at Kanauj in honour of Yuan Chwang.[6] It was attended by twenty tributary kings,[7] four thousand Buddhist monks and about three thousand Jains and orthodox Brāhmaṇas.[8] On the west bank of the Ganges, he built a spacious monastery and a tower one hundred feet high, and put a gold image of the Buddha of his own height within the latter.[9] He ruled over Magadha for some time and then nominated his favourite relative, Mādhava Gupta, to the throne of Magadha.[10]

With the restoration of the later Guptas under Mādhava Gupta, Brāhmaṇism began to gain importance again. Mādhava Gupta was a Vaishṇava. He is described in the Apshad Inscription[11] as having the mark of a discus, like Vishṇu, in the palm of his hand. The same inscription further informs us that his son, Ādityaseṇa, built an excellent temple of God Vishṇu.[12] Ādityaseṇa's mother, Śrīmatī, constructed a religious college and donated it to

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 115.
[2] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 119.
[3] Sinha, *D.K.M.*, p. 266.
[4] Watters, i, p. 351.
[5] *ibid.*, ii, p. 171.
[6] *ibid.*, i, p. 350.
[7] Beal, *Records*, i, p. 218.
[8] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. 177.
[9] Beal, *Records*, i, p. 218.
[10] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 207.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 208.
[12] *ibid.*

religious people, while his wife, Konadevī, excavated a tank to gain religious merit.[1] The Mandar Hill Rock Inscription[2] of Ādityaseṇa also refers to the excavation of a tank by Konadevī. The Shahpur Stone Image Inscription[3] of his reign reminds us of the Sun-worship which was quite prevalent in his reign. The Deogarh or Baidyanātha Temple Inscription[4] describes Ādityaseṇa as the performer of Aśvamedha and other great sacrifices. It also says that he performed 'Tulādāna' on these occasions and erected a temple of Nrihari (Man-lion Vishṇu). The same inscription further informs us that one Balabhadra set up an image of God Vishṇu in boar form, during Ādityaseṇa's reign, in order that his parents might attain heaven. This inscription, although of a later date, may have been removed to its present position from Mandārgiri. However, it is clear that there was a strong tradition about Ādityaseṇa's religious activities and his patronage of Brāhmaṇism. Even though a follower of Brāhmaṇism he also patronised Buddhism. The Chinese pilgrim, Hwui-lun, noticed a temple newly finished by Ādityaseṇa for the priests of the South.[5]

According to the Deo-Barnārk Inscription,[6] Deva Gupta, the son and successor of Ādityaseṇa, was a 'Paramamāheśvara,' the most devout worshipper of Maheśvara or Śiva. At this point it is significant to note that according to Yuan Chwang,[7] Devavarman, the king of Eastern India, offered to return the China-temple to any priest coming from China. If the identification of Devavarman with Deva Gupta according to Sinha[8] and Basak[9] is correct, then his activities or interests in Buddhism are quite apparent, and thus though a follower of Brāhmaṇical faith, he was kind enough to hand over the temple to the proper men who could take greater care of it. Likewise, his son and successor, Vishṇu Gupta, too was a 'Paramamāheśvara,' a follower of Śaivism, as is evident from the same inscription,[10] as also from the Mangraon Inscription[11] which reveals that in the 17th year of his reign one Āvimuktajña of the Kuṭṭuka country, made offerings of lamp to the Temple of Śrī Mitra Keśavadeva, perhaps a syncretic deity combining Śiva and Sūrya. Vishṇu Gupta's son and successor, Jīvita Gupta II, was also a 'Paramamāheśvara,' devout worshipper of Śiva, according to the Deo-Barnārk Inscription.[12] And he renewed the grant to the Sun-temple at Deo-Barnārk. The attitude of the later Guptas towards Buddhism and to other sects is not known. They were, however, tolerant kings and never interfered with the practices and beliefs of sects other

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 212.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 210.
[3] *ibid.*
[4] *ibid.*, p. 213.
[5] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. xxxvi.
[6] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 215.
[7] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, p. xxxvii.
[8] Sinha, *D.K.M.*, pp. 306-07.
[9] Basak, *H.N.E.I.*, pp. 202-03; Majumdar identifies Devavarman with Devakhadaga of the Khadaga dynasty, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 87.
[10] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 215.
[11] *E.I.*, xxvi, p. 246.
[12] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 215.

than their own. Nālandā monastery is a proof of the prosperity of Buddhism during the reign of the later Guptas.

The last ruler of the later Gupta dynasty, king Jīvita Gupta was killed by Yaśovarman, and this caused an era of anarchy and confusion in Magadha and Bengal. It was in such critical circumstances that the Pālas under Gopāla came to power. The Buddhist historian, Tāranātha says[1] that Gopāla, the first of the Pāla kings, was an elected king. This is corroborated by the Khalimpur Copperplate of Dharmapāla.[2] These Pāla rulers were Buddhists by faith, but were not hostile to other religious sects. They were tolerant, and we find many records of their reign invoking Vishṇu and Śiva. During the four centuries of their rule, Bihar and Bengal remained the last strongholds of Buddhism.

The first ruler of the Pāla dynasty, according to tradition, was Gopāla I, who came to the throne in ca. 750 A.D. He was a Buddhist, and in the Bhagalpur Grant of Nārāyaṇapāla,[3] he is compared with the Buddha. He is also credited with the foundation of the Nālandā Vihāra near Oddaṇṭapurī[4] (modern Biharshariff town in Patna district). The "Mañju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa" prophesies that he would "become the maker of Vihāras, Chaityas, gardens, reservoirs, beautiful free hotels, bridges, Deva-temples and caves."[5] This shows that he was a benevolent ruler and thus he might have tolerated other religions as well.

Dharmapāla, the son and successor of Gopāla I, was also a Buddhist. He is described as 'Paramasaugata' in the Monghyr Grant of his son Devapāla.[6] He is credited with the foundation of the Vikramaśilā monastery in Magadha, which was one of the most important Buddhist seats of learning in India from the 9th century to the 12th century A.D.[7] He is also credited with the foundation of the Somapura Vihāra in Varendri.[8] Though he was a Buddhist, he did not persecute other religions of the land. His Khalimpur Inscription[9] speaks of him as honouring all the sects, specially of the Brāhmaṇas. Four villages were granted to the temple of Nunna-Nārāyaṇa. His great regard for the rules of caste is mentioned in the Monghyr Copperplate of Devapāla.[10] The Bodh-Gayā Inscription[11] refers to the consecration of an image of four-faced Mahādeva in Champāsayāṭana. The appointment of Garga, a Brāhmaṇa, as his minister (whose descendants occupied the post for several generations)[12] shows that politics was not influenced in any way by religion and he

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[1] I.A., iv, p. 360.
[2] *E.I.*, iv, p. 245.
[3] I.A., xv, p. 307.
[4] *ibid.*, iv, p. 366.
[5] Jayaswal, *I.H.I.*, p. 42.
[6] I.A., xxi, p. 253.
[7] J.A.S.B. (N.S.), v, p. 1.
[8] A.S.R., 1927-28, pp. 138-39.
[9] *E.I.*, iv, p. 254.
[10] I.A., xxi, p. 257.
[11] J.A.S.B. (N.S.), iv, p. 102.
[12] *E.I.*, ii, p. 160.

(Dharmapāla) being a 'Paramasaugata' was wise enough to appoint a capable Brāhmaṇa as his minister. According to Sastri,[1] Dharmapāla's liberal attitude towards Brāhmaṇism was due to the influence of his Hindu wife Raṇṇadevī, who was a daughter of Parabala, a Rāshṭrakūṭa chief, who erected a Vaishṇava temple at Paithan. All these go to show that Dharmapāla, though a Buddhist, was very tolerant to other religions which flourished during his reign.

Dharmapāla was succeeded by his son, Devapāla. He followed the religious policy of his father. He was a patron of Buddhism, and is described as 'Paramasaugata' in his Monghyr Grant.[2] A votive inscription on a metal image dated in the 3rd year of his reign has been found at Nālandā.[3] Tāranātha[4] credits him with the re-establishment of the Buddhist religion. An undated Buddhist inscription from Ghosarawa[5] (seven miles south east of Biharshariff) informs us that Vīradeva of Nagarahāra visited Mahābodhī and came to Yaśovarmapura Vihāra, and was appointed by Devapāla as the principal abbot of Nālandā. Another Copperplate Inscription[6] with the seal of Devapāla has also been found at Nālandā. This inscription shows that Bālaputradeva, the king of Suvarṇadvīpa, asked for the permission (of Devapāla) to grant four villages for the maintenance of the monastery at Nālandā built by Bālaputradeva himself. All these show Devapāla's great interest in Buddhism. Though a Buddhist, he was also interested in Śaivism as is evident from his Monghyr Grant.[7] A votive image inscription, on a statue of the Buddhist Goddess, Tārā, has been found at Hilsa (near Nālandā).[8] Images of Śankarashaṇa[9] and of Balarāma[10] were also installed in his reign. This shows the spirit of perfect toleration and religious freedom that prevailed during his reign amongst both the votaries of Buddhism and Hinduism. They could freely worship and install images of their respective deities in the Kingdom.

Devapāla was followed by Surapāla who has been identified with Vigrahapāla I by many scholars,[11] although Sinha[12] maintains that they were different persons. Two inscribed Buddhist images[13] belonging to his reign were installed at the Vihāra of Oddaṇṭapurī (Biharshariff town). The Badal Pillar Inscription[14] refers to the fact that he attended the sacrificial ceremonies

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[1] M.A.S.B., iii, p. 6.
[2] I.A., xxi, p. 253.
[3] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 87.
[4] I.A., iv, p. 366.
[5] *ibid.*, xvii, p. 309.
[6] A.S.R., 1921-22, p. 19.
[7] I.A., xxi, p. 253.
[8] J.B.O.R.S., x, p. 35.
[9] A.S.R., 1920-21, p. 35.
[10] *E.I.*, xxv, p. 334.
[11] Banerji is of the opinion that both were the same person, M.A.S.B., v p. 57. This view has been accepted by Roy, *D.H.N.I.*, p. 297; Majumdar, *History of Bengal,* vol. i, p. 127; Sastri, M.A.S.B., iii, p. 8; Kielhorn, *E.I.*, ii, p. 161.
[12] Sinha, *D.K.M.*, pp. 378-386.
[13] M.A.S.B., v, p. 57; I.H.Q., 1927, pp. 586-87.
[14] *E.I.*, ii, p. 166.

performed by his minister Kedāra Miśra and poured holy water over his own head for the welfare of his empire. This shows his interest in Hindu religious sacrifices and ceremonies. He was a pacifist and of tolerant religious disposition, and he maintained this attitude till the end.

The next important king was Nārāyaṇapāla, the son and successor of Vigrahapāla. He showed equal interest in all sects as is evident from his inscriptions. The earliest record of his reign is the Gayā Temple Inscription[1] dated in the 7th year of his reign. This inscription is purely a Vaishṇava one which records the erection of a monastery for Brāhmaṇical ascetics by Bhaṇḍadeva in the seventh year of the reign of king Nārāyaṇapāla. Another record, now known as the Indian Museum Stone Inscription[2] is dated in the 9th year of his reign. It describes the erection of a Buddhist image by Dharmamitra, a Buddhist inhabitant of the Andhra country. On the other hand, Bhagalpur inscription[3] is undoubtedly a Śaiva one, while the Badal Pillar Inscription[4] mentions that an orthodox Brāhmaṇa named Gurava Miśra, son of Kedāra Miśra, was a recipient of his favour. All these inscriptions clearly prove that he (Nārāyaṇapāla) maintained an absolutely catholic religious policy. Perfect religious amity appears to have prevailed in this period. His reign is very much disturbed by wars with the Pratihāras. As a result of these wars, Mahendrapāla, the son of Bhoja I (Pratihāra), annexed Magadha to his empire. It is proved by epigraphic evidences found in this state.

Mahendrapāla (Pratihāra) was also a tolerant king. An inscribed image[5] of the ten incarnations of Vishṇu was found at Rāmagayā in the district of Gayā, which is dated in the 8th year of his coronation. The Guneriya Image Inscription,[6] and some other Buddhist inscriptions[7] found in Bihar point to his toleration of Buddhism. In Nālandā, in the Stūpa area, several Stūpas have been exposed. Three fine little Stūpas "in all probability were built in the reign of Mahendrapāla. All of them bear inscriptions in early Nāgarī and Sanskrit language."[8] One of them records the construction of a Chaitya in the reign of Mahendrapāla[9]. His Digwā-Dubauli (in the district of Saran of Bihar) Plate[10] of Vikrama era 955 (898-99 A.D.) is a unique one as it gives a clear picture of the religious freedom of the Pratihāra kings. It records that different gods were being worshipped by different members of the family. For example Mahārāja Devaśaktideva was a worshipper of Vishṇu, his son Vatsarājadeva was a worshipper of the God Maheśvara (Śiva), while the latter's son, Nāgabhaṭadeva, was a worshipper of the Goddess Bhagavatī (Pārvatī or Durgā). Perhaps after Mahendrapāla's death Nārāyaṇapāla soon

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[1] M.A.S.B., v, p. 60.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 61.
[3] I.A., xv, p. 304.
[4] *E.I.*, ii, p. 160.
[5] M.A.S.B., v, pp. 63-64.
[6] *ibid.*; I.A., xlvii, p. 110.
[7] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 105; A.S.R., 1923-24, p. 102.
[8] M.A.S.B., v, pp. 63-64.
[9] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 106.
[10] I.A., xv, p. 105.

recovered Magadha from the Pratihāras. This is proved by the discovery of a votive image inscription[1] belonging to the 54th year of his reign, found in Biharshariff.

Nārāyaṇapāla was succeeded by his son Rājyapāla.[2] He also adopted the policy of religious toleration. That he was a tolerant king is evident from the Kurkihar Image Inscription[3] which was installed during his reign. Jainism also flourished in his kingdom as is known from an inscription, found in a Jain temple at Nālandā,[4] belonging to the 24th year of his reign. He is credited in official records with works of public utility such as excavation of big tanks and construction of lofty temples.[5]

Rājyapāla was succeeded by his son, Gopāla II. He was a Buddhist by faith, which is evident from the British Museum manuscript of 'Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-Pāramitā' written in the 15th year of his reign.[6] The Nālandā Vāgīśvarī Stone Image Inscription[7] dated in the first year of his reign shows the flourishing condition of Buddhism.

Gopāla II was succeeded by his son, Vigrahapāla II. His reign was very much disturbed by the Kambojas who wanted to establish their political supremacy in Northern India. Very few records of Vigrahapāla II's reign are available. Therefore, it becomes difficult to determine his religious policy. But if the Buddhist Manuscripts, such as the 'Pañcharakshā' (preserved in the British Museum),[8] written in the 26th year of Vigrahapāla's reign, are attributed to him, then he was a Buddhist. In this manuscript Vigrahapāla is mentioned as 'Paramasaugata.' The Kurkihar Bronze Image Inscriptions[9] show that Buddhist images were installed in his times.

Vigrahapāla II was succeeded by Mahipāla I. His religious toleration is attested to by three different images of different gods installed during his reign. The Baghaura Vishṇu Image Inscription[10] and the Nārāyaṇapura Vināyaka Image Inscription[11] (belonging respectively to the third and fourth year of his reign) clearly show his considerate attitude towards both Vaishṇavism and Śaivism. He himself was a Buddhist and is styled 'Paramasaugata' in a Nepal Palm-leaf Manuscript of the 'Ashṭasāhasrikā-Prajñā-Pāramita.[12] This fact is further corroborated by an inscription of this king incised on the pedestal of an image of the Buddha dated in the eleventh year of his reign.[13] In this

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[1] I.A., xlvii, p. 109.
[2] *E.I.*, xiv, p. 329.
[3] J.B.O.R.S., xxvi, p. 236.
[4] I.A., xlvii, p. 111.
[5] *E.I.*, xiv, p. 329.
[6] J.R.A.S., 1910, pp. 150-51.
[7] M.A.S.I., No. 66, pp. 74, 83.
[8] Bendall, *Cat. of Sanskrit MSS. in Br. Museum*, pp. 232-33.
[9] J.B.O.R.S., xxvi, p. 235; Sinha has identified the king with Vigrahapāla II, not Vigrahapāla III as pointed out by the editor of the inscription.
[10] J.A.S.B. (N.S.), xi, p. 17.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 18.
[12] M.A.S.B., v, pp. 74-75.
[13] A.S.R., iii, p. 122; M.A.S.B., v, p. 75.

inscription too he is styled 'Paramasaugata.' Another inscription of the same year was found among the ruins of the Nālandā monastery. According to this inscription, we learn that the great temple of Nālandā was restored, after being burnt down, by a man named Bālāditya, a Jyavisa of Teladhaka who had emigrated from Kauśāmbi, in the eleventh year of Mahipāladeva.[1]

The happy feature of the religious toleration during the period under review is too obvious to be emphasised. We have already seen that the rulers —both Hindus and Buddhists—were not fanatics in imposing their personal religious beliefs and practices on their subjects and they treated all religions and cults well. They not only gave the people complete freedom in the choice of faith and forms of worship, but as mentioned before, they also allowed the deities of the different religious cults other than theirs to be installed in their kingdom. Different religious sects enjoyed freedom of worship and propagation. The religious history of the period makes it clear that there was complete freedom of religious propagation for all religions. For instance, the different schools in Buddhism themselves became famous for the propagation and defence of some peculiar doctrines.[2] So in spite of competitive religious propagation by different sects, there was considerable mutual religious understanding to such an extent that we find different deities fused together into a new syncretic deity, which has features or characteristics of different (two, three or even four) deities. The syncretic icons are known from the early centuries of the Christian era, and the early Hindu religious literature also helped in the rapprochement and reconciliation between the rival creeds.[3] This wholesome feature continued unabated in the Gupta and the Pāla periods. For example, we find the image of Hari-hara[4] who is a combination of Śiva and Vishṇu who were the presiding deities of the two main sects of Hinduism, viz., Śaivism and Vaishṇavism. A mediaeval sculpture from Bihar now in the Indian Museum ,Calcutta, has an image of Hari-hara, and the Hari aspect is emphasised by Ūrdhvaliṅga not always present in such images.[5] Another composite image from Bihar in the Gupta Gallery of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, shows the four-armed Hari-hara in the centre, the back hands carrying a trident, and a conch-shell, and the front hands a skull cup (?) and discus. There are some attendants by his side. The Buddha and Sūrya are standing on the right and left side of Hari-hara.[6] The same syncretic idea is probably expressed in an

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[1] M.A.S.B., v, p. 75.

[2] Watters, i, p. 164.

[3] For details of early syncretistic icons see, Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), pp. 540 ff.

[4] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 2695. Half of the face of the image is of Śiva with jaṭā and the other half is of Vishṇu with Kirīṭa-mukuṭa. There is another such image in the collection of the Mahanth of the Bodh-Gayā temple.

[5] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), p. 546.

[6] *ibid.*, pp. 546-7, pl. xlviii, fig. 1. In this context Banerjea rightly points out the significance of the Pañcāyatana Pūjā evolved by the Smārtas which includes the worship of Vishṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Śakti and the Sun. *ibid.*, pp. 541-42.

image depicted on a seal discovered in Nālandā. The deity appears to hold Chakra (Vishṇu) and Triśūla (Śiva) in its hands.[1] Similar four-armed goddess has a Triśūla and a Chakra in two of her four hands.[2] The religious syncretism of Vishṇu's and Śiva's cults is expressed on a seal from Basarh representing the Śaṁkha (Vishṇu's symbol) and a sturdy humped bull (Śiva's symbol).[3] Various religious cults appear to have been syncretised on a Gupta seal discovered from Vaiśālī, where we have representation of a tall vase with radiating stalks, a slender and tall tree,[4] a battle-axe surmounted by a trident and Kalaśa. Similarly, the image of Ardhanārīśvara is a composite deity emphasising the union of principal deities of Śaivism and Śāktism. Banerjea has published a composite sculpture from Bihar (at present it is in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta).[5] It has been described in the Museum records as Chatürmukha-liṅga, but it is not so. The central block no doubt stands for a conventional Śiva-liṅga but on its four outer faces are shown the figures of Vishṇu, Durgā, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa. In another Śiva-liṅga from Bodh-Gayā,[6] bearing the inscription of Dharmapāla, of the 26th year of his reign, we find Vishṇu and Bhairava being represented on three sides of the Liṅga and on the fourth the inscription is engraved. But there was not only syncretism of Brāhmaṇical religious deities but the spirit of reconciliation and rapprochement went so far as to include deities of non-Brāhmaṇical cult as well. In this connection we may again refer to the image of Hari-hara from Bihar, now in the Indian Museum.[7] This combined image depicts Hari-hara in the centre with its principal characteristics, along with Sūrya and Buddha on either side of the central image. We have already referred to many early and later Buddhist sculptures where the Buddha is sometimes shown accompanied by Indra and Brahmā,[8] who are the Hindu deities. In an image of Bhrikuṭī[9]

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[1] M.A.S.I., No. 66, pl. iii, k.

[2] *ibid.*, pl. iii, 1.

[3] A.S.R., 1913-14, seal No. 84, pl. xlvi, p. 129.

[4] *ibid.*, p. 142, No. 369.

[5] P.I.H.C., 1952, p. 51.

[6] J.A.S.B.(N.S.), iv, p. 102.

[7] P.I.H.C., 1952, pp. 51-52.

[8] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9591, see Plate 22.

[9] See plate 50. The image is preserved in the courtyard of the Sūrya temple in the village Baragaon, near Nālandā. The main image is very much similar to the image No. 51 which Sastri (M.A.S.I., No. 66, pl. xii. 2, p. 116) has identified with Chaṇḍikā, a Hindu deity. Banerjea (*The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd Ed., p. 501, pl. No. xliii, fig. 2) has identified it with Devī or Pārvatī and gives the following description, "One very unique bronze figure of the Devī found at Nālandā is being illustrated here to show the development of this concept about the Goddess in the early medieval period. *There are some very striking features present in this statuette, which require detailed notice.* The three-eyed and four-armed Devī stands in the Samapadasthānka pose, holding in three of her hands a rosary, a hooked staff (triśula ?) and a water vessel (bhriṅgāra). There is a creeping iguana near her

(a form of Buddhist goddess Tārā),[1] Ganeśa and Kārttikeya are shown standing on either side of the goddess. Besides, the goddess is also shown accompanied by the symbolic representations of the moon and the sun. Thus the images mentioned above, show a happy combination of deities of different religions, and remind us of the prevalence of different cults and religious syncretism during this period. The followers of Hindu religion had accepted the Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Vishṇu long ago. In Nālandā and Kurkihar have been discovered many Brāhmaṇical images. Moreover, we find a Brāhmaṇical ruined temple in the heart of Nālandā monastery.

In fact, there are numerous instances which clearly prove that during this period Buddhism freely incorporated Hindu deities into its religion and gave them equal importance. Grünwedel[2] rightly observes that with the spread of Buddhism 'the converts naturally carried into their new religion much of their reverence for the old Hindu gods.' The Hīnayānists accepted Brahmā and Indra by Hindu names in their pantheon of course as subordinate to the Buddha. But later when in the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna the Buddhist pantheon was very much enlarged, we find many Hindu deities being accepted by the Buddhists in different names and also with minor modifications. Thus we find, Saraśvatī,[3] Gaṇeśa[4] and Saptamātrikā[5] being directly included amongst the Buddhist gods and goddesses. The introduction of Tārā[6] with a lotus and a serene face (like Hindu Lakshmī) in Buddhism is a direct outcome of Hindu Śakti-worship. The Buddhists also incorporated with some modifications, Hindu deities like Sūrya, Vishṇu, Kubera, etc. and gave them different names

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right leg, and her lion-mount and another horned animal (a buffalo ?) are shown on the lower section of the pedestal. Heaped Naivedya (offering) pots are shown on four corners of the pedestal, and the sun and the moon are placed on either side of the very beautiful and elaborately designed Śiraśchakra." Most of the description of the image correspond with the principal image of Plate 50, and also with the Sādhana of Bhrikuṭī (a Buddhist goddess). According to her Sādhana (Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 59). "The goddess (Bhrikuṭī) should be conceived as four-armed, one faced, yellow in complexion, three-eyed, blooming with youth; as showing the Varada-mudrā and the rosary in her two right hands and carrying the Tridaṇḍi and the Kamaṇḍalu in the two left; as stamped with the effigy of Amitābha (on head) and as sitting on the moon supported by the lotus." Another Sādhana adds that she should have a peaceful appearance and should wear the crown of chignon on head. In this particular figure, the chignon has replaced the effigy of Amitābha (on head) and the deity is standing on the moon supported by lotus. This description suits the identification of the image with Bhrikuṭī by Kempers (*The Bronzes of Nālandā and Hindu Javanese Art*, p. 52, fig. 15).

[1] *Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa*, verse 508.

[2] Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 182.

[3] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 20, 850; Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 150.

[4] *ibid.*, Arch. No. 8448; *Sādhanamālā* (G.O.S. xli), ii, p. 592.

[5] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 115.

[6] *ibid.*, No. 22.

such as Marīchī,[1] Lokeśvara[2] and Jambhala[3] respectively. Nīlakaṇṭha[4] and Vajrahuṅkāra[5] are the separate adaptation of the mild and fierce forms of Śiva. Simhanāda,[6] with Jaṭā-mukuṭa (and a tiger skin and snake) is, in spite of some additional traits, derived from Brāhmaṇical Śiva. Besides these instances, we have found a large number of Hindu images like those of Vishṇu, Śiva along with Pārvatī, Sūrya, Revanta, Gaṅgā, Gaṇeśa, Sarasvatī, Nāgas and the images of Jain Tīrthaṅkaras such as of Mahāvīra, Pārśvanātha, etc., at the Buddhist monastery Nālandā, and this clearly indicates that this monastery was visited both by Buddhists and non-Buddhists as well. We have already referred to the discovery of numerous Brāhmaṇical images from Kurkihar. On one of the seals discovered at Nālandā is a Gaṇeśa with four hands.[7]

However, some images have been found which depict the Buddhist gods and goddesses as trampling on the Hindu gods and goddesses. For example, Aparājitā and the Vighnāntaka have been shown in separate images as pressing Gaṇeśa with their legs,[8] while Trailokyavijaya[9] is depicted as trampling on Śiva and Pārvatī. These images do not apparently fit in the period which was as we have shown to be a period of religious toleration and cult amalgam. In fact, these images might give an erroneous impression of an aggressive approach of the Buddhists towards some Hindu cults. Most of such images are found in Nālandā-Gayā region. This so called aggressive and provoking attitude towards the Hindu sects by some Buddhists in Bihar may have been a reaction against the hostility of some fanatic Hindus. It is said that "Some Śaivas, Vaishṇavas and Kapilas, who did not like that Dīpaṅkara should preach Buddhism in Tibet, engaged some robbers to take away his life as soon as he passed the border of India."[10] Tāranātha speaking about the destruction of the magnificent library at Nālandā, refers to a more serious hostile act of course of a much later time. He says,[11] "After the Turushka raiders had madeincursions in Nālandā, the temples and Chaityas there were repaired by a sage named Muditabhadra. Soon after this, Kūkūṭasiddha, minister of the king of Magadha, erected a temple at Nālandā, and while a religious sermon was being delivered there, two very indignant Tīrthika mendicants appeared. Some naughty young novice-monks threw washing-water on them in disdain. This made them

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[1] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 3330; see Plate 35; Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 93.

[2] A number of images of Lokeśvara are preserved in the Nālandā and Patna Museums.

[3] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 1669; Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, 73.

[4] Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 48.

[5] *ibid.*, p. 143.

[6] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9623.

[7] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 41, No. S.I. 789.

[8] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 138, pl. viii; see Plate 36.

[9] Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 146-47, pl. xxxi (c).

[10] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 676.

[11] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 7.

very angry. After propitiating the Sun for twelve years, they performed a Yajña, fire sacrifice, and threw living embers and ashes from the sacrificial pit into the Buddhist temples, etc. This produced a great conflagration which consumed Ratnodadhi." It is quite likely that such incidents could provoke some sections of Buddhists in Bihar to develop a hostile attitude towards some Hindu cults and this hostility found expression in the images (which depict Hindu gods and goddesses in an insulting manner).[1]

At any rate, with our present knowledge it is not possible to say as to whether Buddhist images depicting insult to Hindu gods were the result of some Hindu hostility towards Buddhism or they were the cause of provocation to the traditionally liberal religious attitude of the Hindus, some of whom might have attempted or instigated direct harm to Buddhist scholars and institutions. The existence of a few such images and literary references depicting cult rivalry should not lead us to imagine any fanatic religious wars and orgies. We have already seen that there was enough competitive religious propaganda going on in the country by advocates of different religious cults. Philosophical and cult rivalry in trying to prove the superiority of one's cult over the others did not only rest at literary criticism of the others' cults but also found manifestation in cult images. This was not confined to Buddhism *versus* Hinduism only. We find serious rivalry amongst the various Brāhmaṇical cults themselves. Different Purāṇas eulogise the superiority of one deity over the other. This was particularly true of Vaishṇavism and Śaivism. This attitude was a natural development of the Bhakti cult, in which the devotees of different cults began to worship only their respective Ishṭadevas and none else. This attitude could lead to two different tendencies. One was that the devotees of one deity began to consider their own Ishṭadeva as the God and while other deities were mere names of that 'God.' This was a wise attitude. But another tendency was to prove the superiority of the Ishṭadeva over other deities. This is quite manifest in the competitive claims of the Śaivas and the Vaishṇavas about the superiority of Vishṇu over Śiva, or of Śiva over Vishṇu. The Vaishṇavite Purāṇas claim that Vishṇu was greater than Śiva. In the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa[2] it is said that Śiva was born out

[1] It may be of some interest to note that in an image of Vishṇu-avatāra found at Konch in Gaya Dist., while all the incarnations of Vishṇu are depicted, the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishṇu has been left out. This shows the reaction of the Hindu sculptors against the Buddhist fanaticism; A.S.R., 1901-02, p. 13. From the account of the Tibetan scholar Dharmasvāmin who visited Bihar in 1234-36 A.D. (published by the K.P.J.R.I., Patna), we learn that at Vajrāsana (Bodh-Gayā) the Buddhists had put an image of Śiva in front of the Buddha's image to protect it from the wrath of the non-Buddhists. This would suggest that Brāhmaṇical opposition to Buddhism was a factor to be reckoned with by the Buddhists. It is not improbable that with the conquest of Magadha by the Gahaḍwalas and particularly by the Seṇas also, there was a further strengthening of Brāhmaṇism in Bihar, and this is proved by a large number of Brāhmaṇical images of 11th and 12th centuries found in this part of the country. This might have caused some irritation among some Buddhists.

[2] *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, 3, 6.

of Vishṇu and was himself a devotee of Vishṇu. In the story of Ushā and Aniruddha, the superiority of Vishṇu (Krishṇa) over Śiva is suggested. But the Śaivas' sense of rivalry goes much farther. In the Saura Purāṇa a pro-Śaiva work, it is claimed that Vishṇu obtained the discus (Sudarśana Chakra) from Śiva.[1] In a story in the Brahma Purāṇa, Śiva swallows the wheel of Vishṇu and thus proves his superiority.[2] In the Liṅga Purāṇa, Śiva is shown victorious over Vishṇu in the form of Śarabha and Nrisimha[3] respectively. There are iconographic representations of Śiva's superiority over Vishṇu. There are Liṅgodhavamurtis which depict the story of the Vāyu and Liṅga Purāṇas of the failure of Brahmā and Vishṇu in finding the beginning or the end of the Liṅga shown as a huge column. Brahmā is soaring up flying like a goose, and Vishṇu coming downwards as Varāha, to find the highest and the lowest extremities of the Liṅga, and Śiva finally revealing himself to the vanquished gods in the middle.[4] In Śarabhamurti, Śiva is shown in the curious hybrid form as Śarabha standing on Nrisimha, the man-lion incarnation of Vishṇu.[5] Banerjea rightly regards the whole motif owing its 'origin to the feeling of unmitigated sectarian rivalry and bitterness.' Regarding the image the learned scholar observes, "The sculptor faithfully carries out the behest of the rankly sectarian Śaiva myth-maker.[6] It has to be admitted that comparatively speaking the Śaivas betrayed more aggressiveness than other sects in cult rivalry. In the Saura Purāṇa, it is said that Śiva is the origin of life and is ancestor of Vishṇu and Brahmā and the fools deluded by Vishṇu's māyā do not know this[7]. It is even claimed that Vishṇu obtained the kingdom of Vaikuṇṭha because of Śiva's blessing.[8] All the non-Śaivas are spoken in disparaging terms.[9] Now if such was the attitude of the Śaivas even towards Vaishṇavism which was, like Śaivism, a part of Brāhmaṇical Hindu religion, their attitude towards non-Brāhmaṇical cults could not be better. In the Saura Purāṇa, it is said that the Chārvākas, Buddhists, Jains, etc. should not be allowed to settle in the kingdom.[10] They are regarded as irreligious (adhārmikas). It is quite likely that the Śaivas took the lead in the aggressive religious activities against the unorthodox sects, such as Buddhists and Jains.[11] An inscription of the 12th century A.D. found at

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[1] *Saura Purāṇa*, 41, 145.
[2] *Brahma Purāṇa*, ch. 33.
[3] *Liṅga Purāṇa*, part i, ch. 95-96.
[4] Banerjea, *The Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), pl. xxi, fig. 4.
[5] *ibid.*, pl. xxxiv, fig. 2.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 488.
[7] *Saura Purāṇa*, ch. 38, 16:
"Janmādi kāraṇam Śambhu Vishṇu Brahmādipuyam,
Na-jananti mahamurkhā Vishṇumāyā Vimorhitāh."
[8] *ibid.*, ch. 38, 66.
[9] *ibid.*, ch. 64, 44. "Śivabhaktan Vajrarayitra saveshān Śasako chamah."
[10] *ibid.*, ch. 38, 54 :
"Na chārvāko navai Bauddho na jaino yavano-a-pi-nā,
Kapālikā Kauliko vā tasmīn rajye viśetkanchit."
[11] Yaduvansi, *Śaivamat*, (1955), p. 138.

Budayun[1] refers to a Varṇaśiva, a devotee of Śiva, who went to the south and became angry on seeing a Buddhist image at a place and removed the image. We have already referred to the anti-Buddhist activities of the Śaiva king Śaśāṅka in Magadha. The Tibetan traveller Dharmasvāmin refers to the danger to the Buddha's image at Gayā from the non-Buddhists, particularly the Śaivas. It is true that these references do not necessarily belong to a period before the 11th century A.D., but they do suggest that the cult rivalry in some sections was gradually taking a more aggressive and bitter turn later on. The suspicion that the Śaivas were taking the lead on the other side may explain the fact that it is mostly Śaiva deities (Śiva, Pārvatī, Gaṇeśa), that are made special targets of humiliation in the above mentioned Buddhist images.[2]

But these few instances should not lead us to an erroneous conclusion about the general religious tone and temper prevailing in the period. In a vast country like India inhabited by millions of people, different degrees or shades of beliefs and their reactions were very natural. It is quite clear from the vast volume of evidences available (some of which have been noted above) that the kings and the people on the whole manifested wonderful religious toleration and eclecticism. If there was a small section of religious fanatics who were ready to carry on cult rivalry to the extent of depicting one's own cult as not only the best but also to the extent of humiliating other cult-deities, there was a very large section among the various religious groups who believed that their Ishṭadeva was known by different names in other religious communities. In the Matsya Purāṇa Śiva is called 'Vishṇurūpin' and Vishṇu is 'Rudramūrti.'[3] In the Vāyu Purāṇa Śiva is regarded indistinguishable from Vishṇu.[4] Thus many wise men recognised that the worshippers of the different deities were really worshipping only one God. They believed in the wise dictum of the Rigvedic Rishis : 'Ekaṃ Sat Viprā Bahudhā Vadanti.' This was the attitude that helped not only the progress of different religions at the same time but also let one religion or cult deity absorb the characteristics of other religions and other cult deities. This was not only true of different Hindu religious cults but also of Buddhism and Jainism. We have already seen some evidence of such cult amalgams, which were significant features of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain iconography.

Thus it can safely be concluded that on the whole, throughout the state, in the period of study, the atmosphere of religious freedom and mutual understanding prevailed among votaries of the different sects, all of which enjoyed support and protection from the kings irrespective of their own religious

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[1] *E.I.*, i, pp. 61 ff.

[2] One of the forms of Avalokeśvara is of Hari-Hari-Hari-Vahanodbhava in which Lokeśvara (Padmapāṇi—Avalokiteśvara), a Buddhist deity, is riding on the shoulders of Vishṇu, who has Garuḍa (Hari) as his mount and the Garuḍa is mounting on the back of a lion (Hari). Here Lokeśvara may have been taken to be superior to Vishṇu (who is only his mount), and to Durgā (Śakti of Śiva) whose mount is lion.

[3] *Matsya Purāṇa*, 154, 7; 249, 38; 250, 30.

[4] *Saura Purāṇa*, ch. 24, 68.

beliefs. Cult rivalry which sometimes degenerated into vulgar humiliation of some deities of rival cults did not lead to any serious disturbance in the usually placid atmosphere of free religious worship and propaganda and mutual give and take by different religious cults. Bharataratna Bhagawana Das, an erudite saintly scholar, rightly observes[1]: "But differences did not breed rancour, and hence religious animosity very seldom reached the stage of persecuting intolerance."

BUDDHISM

Magadha can very legitimately claim to be the home of Buddhism. It was in Bodh-Gayā that Siddhārtha attained enlightenment and became the Buddha, and the people and the kings of Magadha helped actively in the propagation of Buddhism in the early period. Emperor Aśoka very largely contributed in making it not only an all India but world religion. Magadha continued to take active interest in Buddhism throughout.

A few decades after the Mahāparinirvāṇa of the Buddha there arose a serious conflict among his followers as to the correct interpretation of his rules of discipline indispensable to a monk. This led to the formation of the two divisions of schools, one orthodox and the other radicalist, named Sthāvira and Mahāsaṁghika respectively. This clear breach or schism came to the fore-front at the second council at Vaiśālī.[2] The Mahāsāṁghika made certain additions and alterations in the Theravāda, early Buddhism. Mahāsāṁghikas were advanced and liberal in their outlook, whereas the Sthāviras (Theravādins) were orthodox and they never liked to go beyond the teachings of Lord Buddha, their spiritual master. According to the 'Dīpavaṁśa,' these Mahāsāṁghikas made certain changes in the text of the Tripiṭaka and excluded the Abhidhamma Piṭaka from the sayings of the Buddha. By the beginning of the Christian era, Buddhism had permanently split up into two main broad divisions known as Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. Later on Mahāyāna sect led to the development of Vajrayāna and Tāntric forms of worship. We find Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna and Tāntric Buddhism all prospering in Bihar, with varying fortunes in different periods. In a way the doctrine of Mahāyāna may be said to have developed within the Mahāsāṁghika heresy,[3] which arose in Bihar. However, the adoption of Buddhism by diverse races with different degrees of civilisation profoundly influenced the original character of Buddhism and the resultant new tendencies ultimately took definite shape in the form of Mahāyāna.

The ideals of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna are clearly described by Asaṅga in his 'Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṅkāra.' He describes why one school was called Hīnayāna and the other Mahāyāna. He says that considered from the points of view of the ultimate good of the religion, the instruction and endeavours, the Hīnayāna occupies a lower and smaller place than the other called Mahāyāna and hence it is branded as Hīna (low). This brings us to one of the fundamental

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[1] *Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. iv, Intr., p. 12.
[2] *S.B.E.*, xx, p. 386.
[3] Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 10.

points of distinction between the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna. The ultimate aim of an adherent of the Hīnayāna is to attain his own Nirvāṇa whereas that of the one who professed the Mahāyāna creed was not to seek his own salvation only, but of all beings. Thus it seems that the Mahāyāna had a broad outlook and deep sympathy for the suffering beings, in contrast to the Hīnayāna whose followers were anxious for their own salvation. The prominent differences between the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna were that in the former the Buddha was regarded as the Perfect Being whose precepts and examples were to be followed by each individual to attain enlightenment or Nirvāṇa, while in the latter the Buddha was a god associated with a large number of gods and goddesses, and the worship of his and their images was more important than living an arduous life of morality. The ideal before the Hīnayānist was the attainment of Nirvāṇa, the state of an Arhat, while the Mahāyānist sought to reach the perfect state not by his own efforts alone but through the mediation of a Bodhisattva who stopped short of Arhatship in order to help the suffering humanity to salvation. Naturally the Mahāyāna gained popular support. The support that it received from a large number of renowned teachers like Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Maitreya, Ārya-Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Ācharya Dinnāga, etc. who lived during 1st and 6th century A.D. also helped its progress.

The ideal of compassion for and devotion to the suffering humanity and introduction of a large pantheon of gods and goddesses and the worship of a large number of images, popularised the Mahāyāna sect very much in the country and even outside and gave it a deep humanitarian tone. It was the belief of the Mahāyānists that the Bodhisattva and other Buddhist gods and goddesses were always ready to help their devotees in the attainment of the spiritual merit. This naturally attracted a large number of people into the fold of the Mahāyāna sect. Hīnayāna, on the other hand, lost its appeal to the people, because of its relatively narrow outlook and rigorous codes of conduct. In the Hīnayāna there were neither ceremonies nor personal devotion to gods. But it was the time when people wanted some object of devotion, ceremonies and other paraphernalia in worship which was possible only in the Mahāyāna sect. The rise and growth of the Bhakti cult in Hindu religion had its effect on the Mahāyāna sect. Both the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists worshipped Stūpas. Large number of votive Stūpas have been found in Nālandā, and in some seals also there are representations of Stūpa.[1] We have a unique inscription on the pedestal of an image which shows that Kāśyapa, a native of Rājgriha and a close companion of the Buddha, was deified and worshipped. This inscription has been found in Silao near Rājgriha and on the ground of palaeography belongs to the 9th century A.D.[2] It is thus important to bear in mind that in Bihar at least during the period under review not only the Buddha and Bodhisattvas and their Śaktis were worshipped but even some of the closer companions of the Buddha were deified. This Kāśyapa is to be distinguished from one of the seven Mānushi Buddhas of this name. The inscription proves that this Kāśyapa was a historical person.

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[1] M.A.S.I., No. 66.
[2] *E.I.*, xxv, pp. 327 ff.

In this context, it may be of use to discuss the account of Yuan Chwang, as it throws some light on the relationship between the two Buddhist sects. He writes,[1] "the tenets of the great and small vehicles differ widely." One might expect that their differences might have made it difficult for the adherents of the two systems to live together, but according to him[2] followers of these two sects did live together in some monasteries. This apparent anomaly can be explained when we bear in mind the fact that Yuan Chwang was particularly interested in describing the actual state of affairs pertaining to Buddhism. From his records, it is clear that he was a keen observer of the state of Buddhism in India (as we find him describing each and every monastery which he came across at every step of his journey). Therefore, the aforesaid statement of Yuan Chwang shows that in his period at least the rivalry between the two main sects of Buddhism had lost its sharpness and bitterness, and it was rather on the edge of reconciliation, and the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists, in spite of their differences in religious beliefs, lived together and worshipped in their own ways, though the popularity of Mahāyānism in comparison to Hīnayānism was obvious. The elaborate rituals, image worship and an acceptance of the hierarchy of deities, and the expectation of bliss in heaven for the worshipper were partly responsible for the popularity of Mahāyānism. While the persistence of the Hīnayānists, though in clear minority, has to be recognised it is indirectly another proof of the absolute religious freedom and of religious propaganda in the country.

Buddhism had a temporary set-back due to loss of royal patronage after Aśoka. But during the period under review Buddhism appears to be yet a force though the Gupta emperors were professed believers in Brāhmaṇical faith. Catholic outlook of the Gupta rulers was one of the main reasons for it.

When Fa-Hien came here, he found at Vaiśālī a double galleried Vihāra and the monastery built by Amrapālī, in a good condition.[3] At Pāṭaliputra, the imperial city of the Gupta rulers, he had seen two beautiful monasteries belonging both to Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhism respectively. He describes these monasteries as the centres of advanced learning.[4] It was in the Mahāyāna monastery of Pāṭaliputra that Fa-Hien could procure the Vinaya text for which he had mainly come to India.[5] In consequence (of his success in his quest), he stayed at Pāṭaliputra for three years and studied Sanskrit and copied down the Vinaya text.[6] He also describes the grand procession of the image of the Buddha which was taken out in the city of Pāṭaliputra. The procession was attended by both the Buddhists and non-Buddhists. On this occasion free medical help and food were distributed to poor and helpless

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 162.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 164.
[3] Legge, pp. 72-73.
[4] *ibid.*, pp. 78-79.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 98.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 99.

people.[1] Impressed by the religious and pious lives of the monks in the monasteries at Pāṭaliputra, Tao-ching (another Chinese traveller) did not return to his country.[2]

During the reign of Samudra Gupta, permission was granted to the Ceylonese Government for the construction of a monastery at Bodh-Gayā.[3] In this monastery, there were about 1000 monks. All these go to show that Buddhism was still somewhat popular in Bihar during the Gupta period though compared to the earlier period it was in decline. One of the Gupta rulers, Śakrāditya, (Kumāra Gupta I)[4] became so much impressed by Buddhism, that he founded the Nālandā Mahāvihāra which in course of time became a chief cultural centre in the country, and also an international centre of culture.[5]

But towards the later part of 5th to 7th century of the Christian era the full blast of the rapid growth of Hinduism appears to have been felt by Buddhism. From these accounts of Yuan Chwang, we conclude that Buddhism had received some set-back in Bihar.[6] The Hūṇa invasion and the acts of Śaśāṅka[7] may have partly contributed to this decline of Buddhism. But it is on record that in spite of this Buddhism maintained its hold though somewhat weakened specially due to patronage of Pūrṇavarma[8] and Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya.[9] Afterwards, when Buddhism received royal patronage under the Pāla rulers, it again apparently made some headway. It is during this period that the Tāntric form of worship was introduced into Buddhism.

The study of the development of Buddhism during the period is not possible without knowing the main ideals and rituals of Bhāgavatism, which had attracted a large number of people. Bhāgavatism was the cult of Bhakti or devotion to God Vishṇu, and it had a special charm for its followers as it provided for many festivals and ceremonies.[10] Though connected with the early Hindu religion of the Vedic period it incorporated vast changes in the religious rituals. Bhāgavata religion took its form in the shape of the mythology of the Epics and the Purāṇas. They attracted a large number of people by their wonderful stories holding out promises that those people who heard the Purāṇas, practised the recommended rites and observances and worshipped the gods and goddesses described in them would be rewarded by God. For the common man, religion was something full of rites and ceremonies, and this made the people favourably disposed towards the Bhāgavata religion. This tendency of the masses might not have been overlooked by the Buddhists,

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[1] Legge, p. 79.
[2] *ibid.*, pp. 99-100.
[3] Watters, ii, p. 136; Supra, p. 60.
[4] Supra, p. 62.
[5] Supra, p. 49.
[6] Supra, pp. 54, 66.
[7] *ibid.*
[8] Supra, p. 68.
[9] Supra, p. 64.
[10] This is discussed at greater length in the section 'Socio-religious ceremonies and festivals etc.' Infra, p. 128.

who were much liberal in their views by now. They were not left unaffected by the development of the Bhakti cult, and so they enlarged their pantheon of gods and goddesses, and a large number of popular ceremonies were introduced. This is revealed by numerous images of the Buddhist gods and goddesses found in Bihar. This must have attracted a large number of followers.

The Buddhists not only introduced according to their conception superior deities to attract the general mass, but they also brought about many changes in the paraphernalia of image-worship like those in Brāhmaṇism. Temples were constructed for their deities and offerings were made for the fulfilment of their wishes. Thus, the Mahāyānists' modification of Buddhism by the introduction of image-worship and all the paraphernalia (Sādhanā) attached to it brought far-reaching effects, and it was this that transformed Buddhism which flourished here. Nālandā and Bodh-Gayā were the places of pilgrimage and we find that large numbers of pilgrims from inside as well as outside India flocked to these places for offering their devotion to their gods and goddesses.

Thus gradually the Mahāyānists drifted farther and farther away from the simple teachings of the Buddha and developed a form of religion based intensively on devotion and ritualism. It is due to this attitude of fervent devotion of the Mahāyānists, along with the preaching of active compassion (as mentioned before) that this creed gained the support of millions of people, not only in Bihar but in the whole world.

In this connection, the account of the Chinese pilgrim, Yuan Chwang, is worth noting. He writes about the different schools of Buddhism, which became famous for the propagation and defence of some peculiar doctrine.[1] Perhaps the idea behind the whole drive was to bring the people within the Buddhistic fold by making Buddhism acceptable to all people in general. This surmise is supported by the account of the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien, who writes[2] that conversion was very common in Buddhism. From the very beginning Buddhism was a proselytising religion winning new converts to its fold. The Mahāyānists' new conception of Nirvāṇa or emancipation which every Indian from the most ancient times has wished to attain, was bound to appeal to the people. The theory of emancipation means that every individual has to undergo a series of births and rebirths till his soul or consciousness is free from all impurities or vices. Emancipation means the cessation of this process of births and rebirths and, therefore, of worldly miseries. It was recognised that it is difficult to attain Nirvāṇa. The rise of Bhakti movement opened new spiritual vistas to the common man who found in this not only spiritual satisfaction but also easier application. Towards this newly developed form of Buddhism, people could be well attracted due to the new conception of Nirvāṇa.

Aśvaghosha[3], the upholder of the earlier form of Mahāyāna Buddhism,

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[1] Watters, i, p. 164.

[2] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 69.

[3] Aśvaghosha's *Saundarānanda*, edited by Sastri in the Bibliotheca Indica, xvi, p. 102; Quoted from Bhattacharyya, *Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, p. 25; A.B.O.R.I., x, pp. 2-3.

has compared Nirvāṇa with the extinction of a flame, i.e., as a lamp goes out when the oil is exhausted even so the individual is extinguished when there is no more suffering. In Buddhism as developed earlier (by Mahāyānists) Nirvāṇa is nothing but Śūnya, which means a condition about which neither existence nor non-existence, nor combination of the two, nor negation of the two can be predicted.[1] However, the Śūnya theory of Nirvāṇa was a little difficult to explain to the masses. Therefore, under Maitreyanātha the idea of Yogāchāra or Vijñānavāda (with a positive element) was introduced in the original conception of Śūnya, which was pure vacuity (Śūnya).[2] According to it, the individual neither attains complete extinction nor does he go out like a lamp nor pass into a condition which cannot be conceived. The introduction of Yoga or the ecstatic union of the individual with the Universal Soul was thus a new development in Buddhism, and it was certainly influenced by Hinduism of which Yoga formed a well-known attribute even for centuries before Christ. Asaṅga is credited with the grafting of Yoga on theistic Mahāyāna.[3] This contained the genus of Tāntricism, in which magical formulas became the central feature, and the cult came to be known as Mahāyāna-spell-vehicle.

Soon religious philosophers came forward with a new doctrine known as Mahāsukhavāda or Karuṇā.[4] The new cult in Buddhism which was based on this Mahāsukhavāda was called Vajrayāna. Vajrayāna means the vehicle of obtaining Nirvāṇa through the medium of Vajra, which is another name for Śūnya. It is termed Vajra because it is firm, sound, unchangeable, unpierceable, impenetrable, incombustible and indestructible.[5] Śūnya was regarded as Nairātmā, a goddess in whose eternal embrace the individual mind (i.e., the Bodhichitta or Vijñāna) is locked, and there it remained in eternal bliss and happiness (Mahāsukhavāda). Thus the feminine aspect of Mahāsukhavāda in the doctrine of Nirvāṇa gave rise to what is known as Vajrayāna, and the masses could well appreciate the significance of Nairātma.

Vajra defined as the Prajñā is synonymous with Śakti in the Brāhmaṇical language of Tantra.[6] Thus the development of Vajrayāna or Mahāsukhavāda gave rise to Tāntricism in Buddhism with its varying esoteric or mystical character and with multitudes of gods and goddesses in it. In this way Vajrayāna embodied all that was attractive in Brāhmaṇical religion and attained great popularity. In Hīnayāna, Nirvāṇa was to be attained through self-discipline and meditation. According to Mahāyāna eternal bliss could be had through the grace and help of the Bodhisattva. In Vajrayāna, Nirvāṇa

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[1] Quoted from Bhattacharyya, *Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, p. 26.
[2] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 88.
[3] Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 14.
[4] The character of Mahāsukhavāda is described in *Jñānasiddhi*, ch. vii; See *Two Vajrayāna Works* (G.O.S., No. xliv), p. 57 and *Advayavajrasamgraha* (G.O.S., No. xl), Intro., p. xxxvii and p. 50.
[5] Yogaratnamālā in the *Bauddha-Gāna-O-Dohā*, p. 8.
[6] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, vol. i, p. 421.

could be best attained by magical power or thunderbolt or Vajra.[1] It resorted also to black magic, a part of Tāntricism. This school completely overshadowed all earlier schools of Buddhism, and in course of time it itself became the main cause of the decline of Buddhism in the land of its birth. Now we shall examine the nature of Tāntricism. Tāntricism, at its best, is a philosophy in which the absolute (Buddha) is associated with a dynamic principle for the origination of the universe, and different deities can be located in different parts of the body by means of proper yoga. It is believed that by worshipping this Śakti or Prajñā, objects of material nature as well as spiritual power can be attained in a supernatural manner in a short time. The worship generally consists of uttering mystic mantras and performing secret ceremonies according to the texts known as Tantra.[2]

Tāntricism had become centred round the worship of Śakti or female energy. It is difficult to ascertain the actual meaning of Tantra. Different scholars have explained the word in different ways. Sastri writes[3] "The word Tantra is very loosely used. Ordinarily people understand by it any system other than the Vedas. But it really means the worship of Śakti, or female energy. The union of male and female is the essence of Tantra." Avalon[4] has mentioned some of its aspects as a secret doctrine (Gupta-vidyā) to be gathered not from the written record, but orally from those who hold the key to it, and has pointed it out as the "black art of the crudest and filthiest kind with a rough background of the Śiva-Śakti cult."[5] The same idea is expressed by Bhattacharyya[6] who writes that the Tāntric form of worship included many things, which, when brought to public notice, were likely to give a rude shock to the discerning public. He further points out that secrecy was the keynote of Tāntricism in the beginning. This is clear from the examination of the literary and epigraphic evidences belonging to a period much earlier than 7th century A.D. In the 'Mahābhārata' there is a reference to a Tīrtha named Bhīmasthāna where the deity of Bhīmā was installed and Yonihrada existed in its vicinity.[7] In the 'Brihatsaṁhitā' of Varāhamihira, it is mentioned that the images of the Mātrikās (evidently Saptamātrikās) are only to be installed by those who are well-versed in the Maṇḍalakarma, and this term may have meant the Tāntric-Chakra (Bhairavī), and ritualistic order of it.[8] Banerjea draws our attention to the Gangādhar Inscription of king Visvavarman dated in 480 V.S. or 424 A.D. belonging to the time of Kumāra Gupta I, according to which a temple of the Divine mothers was built, with full of female ghouls of the Divine mothers, who uttered loud and tremendous

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[1] Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, p. 280.
[2] *The Cultural Heritage of India*, iv, pp. 52-53.
[3] Sastri in his introduction to Vasu's *Modern Buddhism*, p. 10; Quoted from Bhattacharyya, *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, p. 53.
[4] Avalon, *Principles of Tantra*, p. 28.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] Bhattacharyya, *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, p. 34.
[7] *Mbh.*, Vanaparva, ch. lxxxii, vv. 84-85. *cf.*; I.H.C., 1953, 16th Session, p. 27.
[8] P.I.H.C., 1953, 16th session, p. 27.

shouts in joy, and who stir up the (very) oceans with the mighty wind rising from the magic rites of their religion. These magic rites were Tāntric in nature, and use of the words Tantra and Ḍākinī in this inscription should be noted.[1] The learned scholar has referred to many evidences from Yuan Chwang's records and life which show prevalence of Brāhmaṇical Tāntricism in different parts of India and the worship of Bhīmādevī of dark-blue stone as the spouse of Mahādeva. The shrine of Śiva is also mentioned near the temple of Bhīmādevī. The natural image of the devī of dark-blue stone may have been an aniconic symbol usually installed in the Pīṭha shrines generally associated with Śaktism.[2] It is very possible that Murtaziganj circular discs found near Patna and belonging to the Maurya or Śuṅga period at the latest have Tāntric significance associated with Śaktism as the female goddesses appear in the said relief.[3] It is quite reasonable to infer that Buddhist Tāntricism with emphasis on the worship of female energy was influenced by earlier Śaivaic mysticism centred round the worship of Śiva's spouse.[4] The distinguishing feature of Tāntricism was that the Male (Purusha) was considered to be passive and Female (Prakriti) was the active agent.

Though most literary works on "Tantra are to be dated not eariler than the 7th century A.D.,[5] there is no doubt that what we understand by Tāntricism was a living faith in India from the very earliest period of the Indian history. Tāntricism was a very very ancient form of religious practice and its origin can be traced from the prehistoric period.

Marshall[6] has found its trace in the Indus Valley Culture. Its references are also found in the Mahābhārata[7] as well as in the Purāṇas,[8] where we find the worship of female deities, the essence of Tantra, as pointed out before. We get its references even in the celebrated Vaishṇava-śāstra namely Śrīmadbhāgavata. There, we find the Brajgopīs worshipping Yogamāyā (Goddess of Śakti) for obtaining Śrī-Krishṇa as their husband.[9] Avalon has pointed out that Tāntricism arose out of Śiva-Śakti cult.[10] According to Chatterjee,[11] the Śaiva cult was very popular among the Vrātyas, about whom it is said that they were the primitive people of India at the time of the Aryan expansion.

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[1] P.I.H.C., 1953, 16th session, pp. 27-28.
[2] *ibid.*, pp. 25-26.
[3] J.B.R.S., xxxvii, p. 178.
[4] *Lamaism*, p. 14.
[5] P.I.H.C., 1953, p. 24; But Chou-Hsing-Kuan (*Indo-Chinese Relations*, p. 152) has said that one Po-Śrīmitra from India rendered Mahāmayuri, Vidyārāgni and Mahābhishekardidharani-sūtra and other Dharaṇīs in China in the first quarter of the 4th century A.D.
[6] Infra, p. 126.
[7] *Mbh.*, vi. 23, where the goddess is addressed as Siddhasenāni (general of the Siddhas); Chanda, *The Indo Aryan Races*, p. 124.
[8] Devī-Mahātmya of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Canto 81-93 refers to Śakti worship; Chanda, *The Indo Aryan Races*, p. 129.
[9] Bose, *Tantra*, p. 20.
[10] Supra, p. 87.
[11] P.I.H.C., 9th session, p. 107.

Magadha is brought into significant connection with the Vrātyas in some mystical hymns of the Atharvaveda.[1] These Vrātyas practised mysticism and perhaps this mysticism fascinated the Vedic Aryans.[2] It is, therefore, not a matter of surprise if in Bihar, Tantra form of Buddhism with its mystical belief became so popular.

A question naturally arises as to who introduced this Tāntricism in the Buddhist religion and why it gained great popularity in Bihar. It is difficult to find an answer with certainty. Traditions hold Asaṅga, the great exponent of the Yogāchāra school, to be responsible for the introduction of Tāntricism in Buddhism. Others regard that Nāgārjuna, the renowned exponent of the Mādhyamika sect, was the real founder of the esoteric school of Tāntricism in Buddhism. Bhattacharyya[3] is of the opinion that the esoteric elements were introduced into Buddhism by the Buddha himself as a provision for the common people whose intellectual calibre would not allow them to follow the path chalked out by him.

It is possible that Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga might have played a great part in the introduction of Tāntricism in Buddhism, but it is difficult to agree with Bhattacharyya's idea that the Buddha (whose life and teachings were a direct revolt against the prevalent religious system of ceremonies and rituals) should have himself made any provision for Tāntric practices of any kind in his teachings in order to popularise it among the uncultured and uneducated masses.[4] No doubt the practice of Tāntricism was quite prevalent in our early society, but the Buddha would have been the last person to introduce those elements into his religion. But what could have possibly happened even during the life of the Buddha was that many of the converts to Buddhism would not have liked or could not have lived the rigorous moral life prescribed by the Buddha for the monks. Those who openly violated these moral precepts were driven out of the Saṅgha. But some might have remained in the Saṅgha but would have secretly continued their magical practices (condemned by the Buddha) and violated the moral precepts of the Buddha. They might have secretly continued taking wine, meat, or even contacts with women prohibited by the Buddha. After the passing away of the Master their number must have increased. Chakravarti has collected some evidence of the existence of Tāntric beliefs and practices in early Buddhist literature.[5] But for sometime they were not bold enough to come out in open but instead they formed Guhyasamāja (secret assembly) in which they continued such practices with a view to claim the Buddha's sanction to their beliefs and practices and thus to enter into Buddhist order they composed 'Saṅgiti' or collection of verses purported to be utterances of the Buddha himself. Thus was composed the Guhyasamāja Tantra,

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[1] *Atharvaveda*, xv, 2; P.I.H.C., 9th session, p. 106.

[2] In the Xth Maṇḍala of the *Rig veda*, we get the famous Devī-Śūkta containing hymns to Durgā, another name for Śakti and the main deity of the Tantras. Bose, *Tantra*, p. 3.

[3] *Sādhanamālā* (G.O.S., No. xli), vol. ii, Intro., pp. xvi-xvii.

[4] Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cult*, pp. 18-20.

[5] I.H.Q., vi, pp. 114 ff.

probably in the 3rd century A.D. Its main contribution to Buddhism was the introduction of Śakti worship. There appears to have been serious opposition to this form of worship and so it was only in the 8th century that it claimed wide support. The Buddhist monasteries by then were reeking with corruption of all kinds and repression of natural instincts had led to secret indulgences in all abuses—wine, women and the rest. Many thinkers revolted against the unnatural life in the monasteries and decided to preach to people to follow natural life. But then for fear of public opinion they preached in secret groups and practised and propagated worship of such deities who patronised free unrestrained incestuous relations. Use of wine and secret indulgence became common features, though as we shall see later, Siddhas like Sarahapā did not like to go to the extreme and supported only natural satisfaction of normal human needs. According to the Tibetan evidence, Buddhist Tantras came into existence after the time of Dharmakīrti. Their origin as a distinct class of literature and a mode of Sādhanā may be placed in the 7th century A.D., and they underwent great development during the three succeeding centuries.[1] It has been shown above that Buddhist Tāntricism was very fundamentally influenced by Brāhmaṇical Tāntricism especially by Śaktism; but at the same time new ideas and symbols were introduced in the Buddhist esoteric system as well. The philosophical base of Buddhist Tāntricism was the Mādhyamika and Yogāchāra systems of Buddhist philosophy. Tāntricism took three main forms in Buddhism. Vajrayāna form of Tāntricism emphasised on mystical ritualism, on Mudrā, mystical power of the Mantras and the worship of the Maṇḍala or Bhairavī Chakra. Sahajayāna Buddhism put absolute faith on esoteric practices and discarded the value of all formalism and knowledge gained from outward sources. We shall see later how the Siddhas ridiculed Mantras, Tantras and learning, and propagated cultivation of Sahaja state of mind by internal efforts or discipline which would lead to the realisation of the union with the Buddha. Kālacakrayāna, the third form of Tāntricism, was developed outside India.[2]

The causes which led to the wide popularity of the Buddhist Tāntricism were many. Tāntricism was a natural growth among the Buddhists. Belief in and practice of magical rites would be popular with the masses, who would find in the recitation of Mantras, Dharaṇīs and the practice of Yoga and Samādhi a way not only to attain Nirvāṇa but also to obtain material gain or even to inflict dire consequences on their enemies. Tāntricism taught that to obtain Nirvāṇa, it is not necessary to follow a rigorous course of moral discipline enjoining bodily suffering and abstinence from worldly desires. According to Tāntricism salvation or merger with Śūnya could be obtained through the satisfaction of all desires.[3] This was a great boon to the common man. Tāntricism allowed taking of wine and meat and even adultery and sacrifice of animals, and ridiculed in general all social restrictions. Most of the great teachers of

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[1] *The Cultural Heritage of India*, iv, p. 219.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 220.
[3] *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, G.O.S., No. 53, p. 27.

this new form of mysticism in Buddhism, some of whom were known as Siddhas were associated with Magadha particularly Nālandā and Vikramaśilā, the two famous centres of Buddhist learning in Bihar. Buddhajñāna and Haribhadra, early Tāntric scholars studied in Nālandā and composed many commentaries on Prajñāpāramitā. Later Buddhajñāna visited Oḍḍiyāna and heard many Kriyā and Yoga Tantras from Āchārya Lalitavajra.[1] Buddhajñāna practised Yoga in a forest north of Bodh-Gayā in a cave (probably Indraśilā cave near Giriak in Bihar Subdivision). Praśānta Mitra and Rāhulabhadra were among his disciples.[2] Buddhajñāna later settled in Vajrāsana and its neighbourhood and is known to have built a new temple.[3] (The system of Buddhajñāna was also very popular in Tibet).[4] Vairochanarakshita of Dakshina-Kośala in Southern India received instructions in Tantra from the Āchāryas of Nālandā at Vikramaśilā such as Kayashu Surapāla (a native of Varendra), Gunarakshita of Vikramaśilā.[5] At the Universities of Bihar Tāntricism was taught as a specialised subject. The well-known teachers of Tāntricism at Nālandā were Kamalaśila, Śāntarakshita and Padmasambhava. They are also held responsible for the propagation of Tāntric Buddhism in Tibet.[6] We have even epigraphical evidence to show that Nālandā was a centre of Tāntric studies. We are told by the Nālandā Copperplate of Devapāla[7] that Nālandā was the abode of Bhikshus and Bodhisattva was well versed in the Tantra.

Siṁhabhadra was a great Paṇḍita of Tantra at Vikramaśilā.[8] Āchārya Jetāri[9] was another famous Paṇḍita of Tantra and his pupil, Ratnākaraśānti,[10] was also a renowned teacher on this subject. The most famous among the Paṇḍitas of Tantra at Vikramaśilā, was Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna.[11] Thus we find that these two centres (Nālandā and Vikramaśilā) were responsible for the development of Tāntric Buddhism in Bihar.

This Tāntric Buddhism was a form of Buddhism, also known as Vajrayāna which unlike primitive Buddhism, advocated recital of Mantras and Dharaṇīs, practice of Yoga and Samādhi, and lastly worship not only of the Buddha in different Mudrās, but even of a host of gods and goddesses.[12] According to Tāntric belief the Ādi Buddha or Vajradhara transformed himself into five Dhyāni Buddhas, and associated each of them with a Śakti. These five Dhyāni Buddhas (Vairochana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Akshobhaya) presided over the five Skandhas or elements of which

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[1] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 368.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 371.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 372.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] *ibid.*, ii, pp. 844-45.
[6] Supra, p. 54.
[7] *E.I.*,
[8] Infra, p. 177.
[9] Infra, p. 177.
[10] Infra, p. 178.
[11] Supra, p. 54.
[12] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 87.

the Universe is composed namely, Rūpa (form), Vedanā (feeling), Samjñā (perception), Saṁskāra (impression) and Vijñāna (ego-consciousness). Some Buddhists gave importance to one and some to the other Dhyāni Buddha and their Śaktis. This led to a veritable addition to the already enlarged Mahāyānist pantheon. It is true that all the five Dhyāni Buddhas were conceived as manifestation of the same power—Śūnya, but at any rate for all practical purposes a large number of deities (male and female) were introduced. Some of the deities could only be distinguished by the Mudrās (postures of hand) or by the object held in one or the other hands. Later we find also a large number of images of Ḍākinīs and awful Sambhara. The Vajrayānists through all the seemingly unmeaning practices, rites, ceremonies, Mantras and meditation sought to attain Bodhi; to them Vajrayāna was a raft by which one could cross the ocean of existence, which is full of the snares of false subjectivity.[1] The discoveries of a large number of Tāntric or Vajrayāni images of female deities like Tārā, Bhrikuṭī, Vajravārāhi, Vāgiśvarī, Parnaśavari, Prajñāpāramitā, Vajraśāradā, etc. further strengthen our point that Tāntric Buddhism flourished in Bihar during the Pāla period. Vikramaśilā and Nālandā Universities had regular advanced courses in Tantra under qualified professors.

The recital of Mantras and Dharaṇīs, practice of Yoga and Samādhi, etc., were not possible without the help of a Guru.[2] It has been specially enjoined that no one except one properly initiated could enter the fold. Thus the Guru came to be given an exalted position in these systems. In praise of Gurus, Sarahapā (a Siddha of the Pāla period)[3] writes, "It is through the help of the Guru that one could solve one's doubts." At another place he again praises them by pointing out that one must rush to hear the teachings of Gurus, as one would rush to drink nectar.[4] Sarahapā is not the only Siddha who has spoken about the Guru, but Sabarapā has also made comments on their respectable position. He writes[5] that Nirvāṇa can be had through the help of a Guru. Thus the position of the Gurus in Tāntric Buddhism became very important.

The Gurus began to advocate their religious system in a most confident manner and developed a religion which superficially appears to be based on gross vulgarism. To the Tāntric, the world was absolutely without a substance and there was no duality. Every thing is Vajra or void. Therefore, he could hardly have respect for objects of general reverence or feel hatred towards any object treated with disdain by ordinary mortals.[6] Being one with the ultimate reality, he was bound with no laws created by men. Sexual

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[1] Kalpanā-jāla-pūrṇasya saṁsārasya maho dadheh,
Vajra-yānam səmaruhya kova param gamisyati (*Two Vajrayāna Works*, p. 31, G.O.S.). Quoted in *Introduction to Tantric Buddhism* by Dasgupta, p. 79, footnote 4.

[2] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 92.

[3] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 2.

[4] *ibid.*, p. 10.

[5] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 20.

[6] *Cultural Heritage of India*, iv, p. 267.

symbolism or Yogic practices were not abhorent to them being just a means to union with Bodhichitta (Prajñā and Karuṇā). They might have in principle and some in real practice looked upon complete merger in a woman as the highest form of Yoga and Samādhi which would give them Siddhi or high magical power, but in general this religion for all practical purposes degenerated into obscene and perverted practices. For instance, they advocated that one who strives after salvation should always enjoy Prajñāpāramitā or the perfect truth. This Prajñā they said resides in every woman on earth, and they should be enjoyed without reservation. Good, bad, indifferent, diseased and depressed, all are welcome. No distinction should be made between women of higher castes or lower ones, and no woman even those closely related should be allowed to escape.[1]

By Prajñā was meant the goddess, or the Mudrā (the women to be adopted for the Sādhana) or the Mahāmudrā or Vajrakanyā or young women (Yuvati) or often the female organ. In the Śrīguhyasamāja Tantra, a beautiful girl of sixteen is to be adopted for the practice and is said to be the Prajñā.[2] These may be symbolical meanings only, but there is no doubt that they could easily degenerate into obscenity and vulgarism among the so called many initiated Tāntrics. Sex symbolism was commonly used in Tāntric rites, ceremonies and Mantras.[3] Of course the Vajrayānists believed and preached that the unnatural repressions in the minds of men in other religious systems were defective as they could not achieve the desired tranquillity of mind for the realisation of Śūnya or Boddhichitta, but by proper guidance of the flow of natural human instincts under a true Guru, men may learn to escape the miseries of the world which are born of man's desires. It is claimed by Āryadeva that when women are charmed and enjoyed by a Yogin whose mind is bent on the good, they conduce to the fulfilment of desires and also to liberation at the same time.[4] But for common people it was bound to lead to undesirable and vulgar practices.

All these may tend to show that the mentality of the general masses had degraded very low and this helped the Gurus to develop such a form of religion which, according to Bendall,[5] was brought to "the level of very thinly-veiled Kāmasūtra." Such practices must have attracted the uneducated and uncultured masses and given rise to further subdivisions in Vajrayāna Buddhism, known as Avadhūtī, Chaṇḍāli, Dombi or Bangālī.[6] But we should bear in mind that the religion so preached was very mystical and the language to express it was equally mystical, and it would not be fair to deduce commonly understood meanings from these mysterious verses. They might have used

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[1] Bhattacharyya, *Sādhanamālā*, ii, Introduction, p. xxxii.

[2] Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tāntric Buddhism*, pp. 113-15.

[3] *ibid.*, pp. 153, ff.

[4] Āryadeva, *Chitta-viśuddhi Prakaraṇa*, vs. 29-30, quoted by Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tāntric Buddhism*, p. 207.

[5] Quoted from Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*,' Intro. p. xviii.

[6] These names are based on the group (castes) of the people who adopted this form of religion. Sastri, *Bauddha-Gāna-O-Dohā*, p. 12.

these words to express high spiritual realisations. At any rate some of the Tāntric works are highly philosophical and mystical and certainly far away from vulgarism. Sex symbolism may have been used to interpret philosophical and mystical ideas.[1] The preaching and practices of the Siddhas were evolved out of the Guhyasamāja Tantra. Guhyasamāja meant three aspects of the Body, Speech and Mind which are called Guhya or 'hidden,' and their group is called Samāja or 'assembly.' "This group symbolises all the Buddhas. For this reason the transcendental Body, Speech and Mind of the Buddhas are called Guhya or 'hidden'....the body which manifests itself as a pair (Body and Mind), represents by its nature an assembly of all Buddhas. This was called the Great Vajradhara or All Buddha—The Universal Buddha. Since this represents a final stage, the Tantra of words which helps to elucidate its meaning should be regarded as the greatest of the Tantras..... Āchārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples maintained that the Guhyasamāja represented the essence of all the 84000 Buddhas.[2] According to experts of the Guhyasamāja, the Guhyasamāja Tantra was first preached by Munendra at the request of Indrabhūti, the king of Oḍḍiyāna—and from Indrabhūti a Yogin (Lo-va-pa) heard it and taught it to king Viśukalpa of the Southern country, and the Mahā-Brāhmaṇa Saraha heard it from him and taught it to Āchārya Nāgārjuna. Latter's chief disciples were Śākyamitra, Āryadeva, Nāgabodhi and Chandrakīrti. Thus Sarahapā is one of the pioneers of this cult and it was, therefore, natural that his Dohāgītikosha became subject of study and ritualistic practices by his followers in India and Tibet. Yosa of Za-hor (Sabour or Sābhara), Krishṇasamyja-Vajra of Vajrāsana, Śāntibhadra of Rājgriha, Kashmirian Jñānakara, a disciple of Naropā, were great teachers of Guhyasamāja. Nāgabodhi taught it to Tillopā, who taught to Naropā and the latter in turn to Kusali senior.[3] According to Sahajasiddhipaddhatināma Rishi Jagadīśvara taught Sahajaratnopadeśa Tantra to princess Mahālīlādevī, who taught it to king Vairavajra, the latter to farmer Padmavajra, the latter to wine merchant Sahajavajra, the latter to weaver Nandavajra, the latter to Brāhmaṇivajra, who taught to the barber Siddhivajra, the latter to Śrī Sarvajagannātha, the latter to Cittovajra, and the latter to his sister Lakshminkarā, who taught to king Indrabhūti or to Lo-va-pa.[4] Thus men and women of high and low class have been the preachers or Gurus of the Sahajiya cult based on the Guhyasamāja Tantra. The Guhyasamāja originated in several lineages. Jñānasiddhi contains several quotations from the Guhyasamāja Tantra composed by king Indrabhūti. Padmavajra the author of the Guhyasiddhi seems to have been the farmer Padmavajra;[5] Virūpā and Avadhūtipā were great Siddhas. Another Siddha was IDon-nar-ba who belonged to a low caste of Magadha, and who was initiated by Avadhūtipā. IDon-nar-ba exhibited many miracles, proceeded

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[1] I.H.Q., 1930, pp. 570-85; J.R.A.S., 1935, p. 631.
[2] *The Blue Annals*, i, pp. 356-57.
[3] *ibid.*, pp. 359-361.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 362.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 363.

to South India and later to Nepal. The Princess Lakshminakarā (729 A.D.) is also regarded as the founder of the Sahajiya cult of Buddhism.[1] According to Rahula Sankrityāyana, Sarahapā a contemporary of king Dharmapāla was the first Siddha, though his disciple's (Sabarapā's) disciple Lūipā is reckoned first among the Siddhas.[2]

The religious cult preached by the Siddhas has also been termed the Sahajiya sect. The Siddhas are traditionally believed to have been eighty-four. Lūipā has been regarded as the first of the Siddhas. "The fundamental doctrines of the Buddhist Sahaja school is the doctrine of Sahaja : the ideal state of the Yogin, a sect in which the mind enters the vacuity, becomes free from duality and rejects the illusory character of the world."[3] In this cult, Yogic practices and cultivations of mental powers played an important part. As we have seen Nālandā and more particularly Vikramaśilā were important centres of this new development in Buddhism specially in the Pāla period.[4] Sarahapā, Naropā, Tillopā, Śāntipā and some other Siddhas were closely associated with Magadha.[5]

The Siddhas advocated single-minded devotion to the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas, who resided in the body and condemned worship of Hindu deities like Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva and rejected outright the efficacy of worship of stone images or going on pilgrimage to sacred places for the attainment of Nirvāṇa.[6] The condemnation of the visits to holy places and worship of images is a very unique feature of the Sahajiyās sect of Buddhism. Moreover their positive contempt for scholasticism, formalities of religion and chanting of hymns or spells deserve special mention as making a rebellious departure from the so long accepted traditional beliefs and behaviourism of the religious groups. Sarahapā[7] observes :

"Paṇḍia Sa-ala Sanya Vamvānaī
Dehahi Buddha Vasanta ṇa jaṇai
Aviṇagamana ma teṇa vikhaṇioa
Tovi ṇilajja bhaṇaī hao paṇḍioa."

The sense is that the Paṇḍita elaborately describes all the secrets of truth but does not know that the Buddha resides in the body. With all his erudition the chain of birth and rebirth will not be broken, yet the learned scholar shamelessly goes on lecturing. Kaṇhapā clearly rejects the utility of Mantra and Tantra.[8] Sarahapā also observes that there is no peace in muttering the Mantras, as a fallen wall cannot rise up.[9] He regards Mantra and Tantra as

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1 *Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. iv, p. 270.
2 *Dohākosha* by Sarahapā, edited by R. Sankrityāyana, Intro., pp. 12-14.
3 *Cultural Heritage of India*, iv, p. 223.
4 I.A., ccxxv, 1934.
5 Infra., p. 180.
6 J.D.L., xxviii, p. 3.
7 *ibid.*, p. 18, v. 68.
8 *ibid.*, p. 27, v. 28 (first line) (Akkuṇa ki Jai manta ma tanta).
9 *ibid.*, p. 5, vs. 6. (Mantah mante ssani ṃa hoī; Paḍila bhiti ki uhia hoī).

causes of confusion.[1] The Siddhas on the other hand—passionately believed in the identity of the devotee with the ultimate Reality or Śūnya. While the Mahāyānists and the Vajrayānists as well believed in the devotee or bhakta as a separate identity, worshipping the deity, the Siddhas held that the deity resides in the human body and what is needed is to realise this truth and be merged in Him. This principle of absolute merger of the devotee with his deity, the state of feeling of this absolute loss in the Śūnya—the ultimate—, the realisation of the state of 'Samarasa' by the devotee with the deity is a very remarkable and highly philosophical truth and experience preached by the Siddhas. This together with the eloquent rejection of the religious and spiritual values of the worship of images or going on pilgrimage reminds one of the Sākhīs of Kabir. Sarahapā[2] says, "Ki tehi tirtha tapovana jai, Moksha ki labhiyahi pāni nahāi"....'What use will come to him by going to pilgrimage. Can salvation be obtained by taking bath in water?' As a matter of fact the enitre body was taken to be an assembly of places of pilgrimage. He further says that "here in the body was Śaraśvatī, Somanātha, Gangāsāgara, Vāraṇāsi, Prayāga, the Sun, the Moon, Pīṭha and Upapīṭha, and I uselessly wandered so far, but I have never seen nor heard of a Tīrtha equal to the body."[3] The biting satire on the superstitious beliefs and practices of some cults for attaining supernatural merits, is clearly expressed in these Dohās of Sarahapā who observes that if by remaining naked one can attain emancipation then jackals and dogs should attain Nirvāṇa, and if by decorating oneself with peacock's feathers one is to get salvation then peacocks and feathers will be emancipated.[4] One is reminded of Kabir's saying that "if God is to be met by worshipping stones, Kabira would worship mountain (Patthar Puje Hari Mile to Kabirā Pūje Pahāra). Besides ridiculing the value of Mantras and Tantras, Sabarapā declared it to be of no use to leave home and go into wilderness in quest of Bodhi (perfect enlightenment). According to him this distinction between home and outside about the residence of the ultimate should be given up, and it should be realised that the Buddha resides everywhere and what is needed is a pure and unsullied mind and heart: Worship Him constantly.[5] He rejected distinctions between castes and eatables and

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[1] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, p. 10, v. 43. (Manta ṇa Tanta ṇa deya ṇa dhāraṇa, satvami re vaḍa vibhama kārana).

[2] Sankrityāyana, *Hindi Kāvayadhārā*, p. 7.

[3] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, p. 22, No. 96, 97:

"Ethu se sarasai so vaṇaha, Ethu se Gaṅgāsā asa.
Varāṇasi paāga ethu, se chāṅda divā asa.
Chiṭṭha uyapiṭṭha, ethu bhai bhamia eibhiṭṭhau.
Dohāsarisa tinyə, bhai suṇauṇa diṭṭhau."

[4] *ibid.*, p. 2, vs. 6-7:

"Jai ṇagagāviha ɬoi mukti tā suṇahəṁ siālaha.
Pichhagahane diṭṭha mokha (ta morahu chamaraha)."

[5] *ibid.*, p. 27. (Intr.)

"Garahi ma thākku ma jahi vaṇe, jahi tahi maṇa pəṅāna.
Soalu Nirantara Bohi-ṭhia, Kahin bhava kahin ṇibhāṇa.

non-eatables (jai caṇḍāla-ghare bhunjai, teavi ṇa laggai leru, vajjai sudda ṇa bamhaṇa).

One of the characteristic features of the Sahajayāna is that it recommends leading a normal life and natural satisfactions of human desires. Sarahapā desires that one may live in his house with his wife and without resorting to Dhyāna and Prabajjā. By eating, drinking wine and enjoying life one could attain Siddhi. One should carry on the normal exercise of his senses, adopt normal behaviour and should go on with his trade and business. The world is full of pure pleasures; dance, sing and be merry and enjoy life.[1] But the Siddhas, unlike Sarahapā, did not encourage indulgence in the enjoyment of sense pleasures. They warned the people that though they should enjoy life they should feel no attachment for the pleasures of life. They should enjoy life without being drowned in it as when drawing water one need not touch water.[2] So while the Siddhas did not regard pleasures worth giving up, they did not recommend attachment. Sarahapā in the vein of the Upanishadic simile (Bālyena tishthāsad) advises the people to live life as innocently and without attachment as a child.[3] The core of the Sahajayāna teaching was to experience absolute unity with Vajra or Śūnya which was possible by following the normal life without attachment to pleasures. One should lose his identity in the Mahāsukha as salt in water.[4] Sarahapā is quite confident that restless mind if left to follow its nature ultimately becomes pure and firm;[5] and then the distinction of existence and non-existence (bhāvābhāva) does not trouble him. Tillopā says "Sahaje bhāvā bhāva na puchchha, suṇa karuṇa tahi samarasa ichchia."[6] Do not think that there are existence and

Nau ghare nau vaṇa Bohi thiu, ehu paṅāṇaha bheu.
Nimmala chitta-sahāvata Karahu avikala seu."

[1] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, p. 6 (Jhāṇa-hiṇa pabhaje rahau, Gahi vasante bhājjen Sahiau). v. 18.
p. 12 (Khā-n-te pivante sura ramante, Āli-ula bahalaho Chakka pharante, evahi siddhi Jāi paralokaha, māthe pāa dei bhua loā-ha). v. 48.
p. 16 (Dekhau saṇau paisau sāddau, Jighahau bhamau baisaū uttau, ālamāla bavaharen bollau, maṇa achaṭhu ekaāiremma chalau). v. 63.
p. 30 (Jaijoga puria sahajā ṇande, ṇā chchahu gāahu vilasahu chenge). v. 136.

[2] *ibid.*, p. 18, vs. 71.
("Visa a ramante ṇa Visuahin lippai,
ū-ala haranten ṇa pāṇi chchappai.")

[3] *ibid.*, p. 16, v. 64.
(Chitā chittavi pariharahu, tima achchhahu jimi bāla).

[4] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 1.
(Alio dhamma—mahā suka pai saī, Lavaṇo jimi pānihi Villijjai.)

[5] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, pp. 22, 26, vs. 94, 120.
(Ehu nia maṇa sabala chātara sa chala, melahi Sahāva ṭṭhā-a-vasai dosa ṇimmala. Chittahin Chitta yadi lakkhana jāi, chañchala maṇa pavaṇa thira thaī, chitta thira jo nimmala bhāva, tahiṅa paisai bhāvābhāva).

[6] J.D.L., xxviii, p. 41.

non-existence in Sahaja (i.e., do not attribute positive and negative character to Sahaja). There are in it vacuity, compassion and Samarasa; One has to realise the Truth as the one emotion or all pervading bliss, where there is neither Prajñā nor Upāya as different entities and there is no sense of difference anywhere. To realise the Truth, it is no use going to a great distance (Laṅkā). One can find Him nearest to oneself in oneself by seeing into oneself. The attempt to find Him at a great distance is as ridiculous as seeing the bracelet in one's own hand in a mirror. "Uju re uju chāḍi mā lehure vanka, niaḍi bohi (Buddha) mā jāhure Laṅkā. Hāthera Kāṅkaṇa mā leū dāpaṇa, apaṇe apā bujhatu nia maṇa."[1] This great idea of Essence within man and it pervading equally (Samarasa) in all has been remarkably and most solemnly yet simply stated here by Sarahapā. This emphasis on non-duality led the Siddhas to make no distinction between the learned and the ignoramus, between high and low and between man and woman. Both positive and negative aspects of mind vanish in Samarasa. Distinction between himself and others had no meaning for him, otherwise one cannot get away from the cycle of births and rebirths. So Sarahapā says—"Jāva ṇa appaū para pariā ṇasi, tāva ki dehāṇuttava pāvasi, emai kahiu bhāṇti ṇabḥāvā, appau appā bujjhihi tāvā."[2] Only when the doubt about himself and others as different entities ceases to agitate the restless mind, man realises the highest bliss (Paramamahāsukha), and his mind is at perfect rest, where neither the wind nor the Sun and the Moon can enter, and of this there is neither beginning, middle nor end, neither existence nor release..... "Jābi maṇa marai, pavaṇaho tahi Kha-a-jāi, ehu so paramamahāsuha, Saraha Kahiau-jā.....Jahimaṇa pavaṇa ṇa sancharai, ravi-sasi nāhin pavesa tahin Badhichitta visāma karu, Sarahen kahiā uesa.....Āli ṇa anṭe ṇa majjha tahin, nau bhava ṇau nibbaṇa, ehu so paramāmahāsuha, ṇau par ṇau appāṇa."[3]

But Sarahapā and other Siddhas did neither rest with preaching about the essential ultimate nor with recommending living a normal life of enjoyment. They felt real compassion towards the poor and suffering sections of the humanity and eulogised the virtue of helping the poor, and then only justifying the enjoyment of their material possessions. Sarahapā emphasises the absolute, inter-dependence of vacuity and compassion (Śūnyatā and Karuṇā).[4] Sarahapā has boundless sympathy for the miserable and he thinks that the body without being of any help to the needy is of no use. He says that if the needy goes away disappointed then the householder should better abandon the house and take to a begging bowl; without making gifts and doing good to others, life is of no use. In such a case it is better to give up life.[5]

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[1] J.D.L., vol. xxx, v. xxxii, p. 138.
[2] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, v. 67, p. 16.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 8, v. 30; p. 12-13, vs. 49, 51.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 30 (Intr.) :

Suṇna taruvara phulliau, karuṇā viviha vichitta,
Aṇṇā bho-a paratta phalu ehu sokkha paru chitta.

[5] *ibid.* :

(Jo atthīaṇa thīau, so jai jāī ṇirāsa,

Thus the Sahajayāna aims at realising the innate nature (Sahaja) of the Dharma and at the same time it justifies its terminology—Sahajayāna—by being natural and so easy because it preaches that man can realise the Truth and experience Samarasa by not suffering and strangling the natural human instincts but by following the human nature itself. But to arrive at the state of experience the need of a Guru was essential. It was, therefore, the belief of the Siddhas that the realisation of this noble Truth and the way to attain Nirvāṇa, the state without beginning and end, such non-duel joy can be had only with the help of the Gurus. Tillopā says—"Āirahia yehu Aṇtarahiya, Varagurupā-a-a (dva-a Kahia)."[1] What to speak of fools when even the learned cannot realise it without a Guru. "Vaḍa aṇa loa ago-ara taṭṭa pandialoa agamma, jo gurupā (apasaṇa taṅhi ki chitta agamma)." The truth is unattainable by the fools, by other people as well as the learned world. Can the mind remain inaccessible to him who is blessed by the Gurus ?[2] This indispensability and absolute surrender to the Guru is another distinguishing feature of the Sahajiya sect of Buddhism.

Sarahapā rejects the use of knowledge of all the Śāstras for quenching the spiritual thirst without the help of the Guru. According to him the words of the Guru are nectar, and one who does not run to drink it will die thirsty in the desert of scholasticism.[3] He further says that by the words of the Guru the fetters of Māyā are broken.[4]

Sex symbolism is very commonly expressed in the Dohās or verses of the Siddhas. Kaṇhapā says "Ḍombi era Sāṅge jo joi ratto, Kanahā ma chhāḍaa Sahaja—Unmaṭṭo."[5] The idea is that one who makes love with the beloved, becomes mad in Sahaja and cannot leave her for even a second. Similarly esoteric idea is expressed in this "ālo ḍombi toe Saṁa Kariba ma sāṅga, nigḥiṇa kāhṇa kāpāli joi lāṅga."[6] Highly esoteric and passionate expressions are openly stated by Gundripā—"Tiaḍḍā chāpī jogini de aṅkavālī kamala kuliśa ghāṇṭa karahū biālī, joini tāi binu khanahī na jīvami, to muha chumbi kamala rasa pīvami."[7] The sense is that 'after pressing the main spots, I will embrace you and I will not live without you for a moment, and after kissing your mouth will drink the nectar of the eyes.' For understanding the nature of Nirvāṇa and experiencing its beatitude, enjoyment of woman (wife)

Khaṇḍasarāveṅ bhikkha varu, chchha ḍahu ai gihavāsa,
Parauāra ṇa kīa-u, athi ṇa dīa-u dāəṇ, ehu samsāre
Kaivaṇa phalu, varu chhaduhu appāna.)

[1] J.D.L., xxviii, p. 1, v. 6.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 1, v. 8.
[3] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, p. 12, v. 44.
(Guru-va-a-ṇa ami-a-rasa, dhavahin ṇa piviau jahin,
bahu sātthāttha marutthalihin, tisia maribo tahin.)
[4] *ibid.*, p. 20, v. 84.
(Guru-a-va-ana Sansiddhau jaben,
Indiāla Sabha tuthi taben.)
[5] J.D.L., xxx, p. 126.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 116, v. x.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 110, v. iv.

was considered much more helpful than Mantra or Tantra. Kaṇhapā says—"Ekku ṇa kijjai mantra ṇa tantra, ṇia gharaṇī (his own wife) lai keli karanta, ṇia-ghara gharaṇī jāva ṇa majjai, tava ki pañcha vaṇṇa viharijjai."[1] It is no doubt true that these esoteric ideas might often convey a highly philosophical sense, and the "analogy of sexual act has been introduced into the text in order to explain the blissful experience of beatitude."[2] It is also true that the Siddhas believed in Karmamārga and held that it should not be discredited because it is the means to know the different kinds of moments and pleasures. According to the Siddhas there are four stages of pleasure—Ānanda, Paramānanda, Virāmānanda and Sahajānanda. The characteristics of Sahajānanda are its uniqueness, Vilakshaṇa, which is free from passion and indifference. This high state which Sahaja Siddhas sought to attain was obtained without being affected by passions. The Karmamudrā and Mahāmudrā in which the Siddhas excelled did not pollute them because they were above all these base passions. "Just as a man versed in the science of poison does not die even after swallowing the poison, the (Sahaja) Yogi, in the same way, though he may enjoy the pleasures of the material world, does not get attached to the world. Do not slight the Karmamudrā. Through it the different kinds of moments and pleasures may be known.[3]

But all said, it is obvious that the Vajrayānists and Sahajayānists were preaching dangerous practices which were certainly leading the general masses of the people to sexual indulgence and vulgar or perverse practices. It is also to be borne in mind that the Siddhas were generally moving among lower classes such as Ḍombī, Chaṇḍālī, Śabari, Raṅḍī, etc., and only by esoteric symbolism the Siddhas could preach highly philosophical truth to them. But at the same time it is obvious that such esoteric expressions and practices, vehemently preached as the means of attaining Nibbāna (Nirvāṇa) must have increased the moral degeneration which was already pronounced due to Tāntric influence. It was bound to contribute to the decline of Buddhism.

Thus from the general survey of the history of Buddhism during the period under review, we find that the Buddhism of this period was neither the ancient ethical Hīnayāna nor the philosophical Mahāyāna, but a new creed called Tantrayāna with ritual and magical incantations which in due course of time were absorbed into Hinduism. The introduction of Tantra and the worship of a large number of gods and goddesses in this new form of Buddhism narrowed down the gulf between Buddhism and Hinduism and it did not take long for the lay Buddhists to transfer their allegiance wholly to the Hindu gods and goddesses and long ago the Hindus had already included

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[1] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 149.

[2] J.D.L., xxx, p. 44.

[3] *ibid.*, xxviii, vs. 24-25, p. 3.

(jima visa bhakhayi visahi paluttā,
tima bhava bhujayī bhavahiṇ jutta,
Kammabhudda ma dusaha joi
Khaṇa āṇaṇda bheu jaṇi, jjai.)

the Buddha as one of the ten Avatāras of Vishṇu. Perhaps this was the main idea behind the sculptors of this period, who have introduced crown or Kirīṭa-mukuṭa in the image of the Buddha[1] to make him resemble Vishṇu. Senart[2] at one place writes, "the Buddhist tradition certainly moves in a Krishṇaite atmosphere." Then it has to be admitted that from the very beginning of the period under review, i.e., from the advent of the Guptas to power, Buddhism was yielding place to Brāhmaṇism (loosely called Hinduism) which was receiving direct patronage of the Gupta emperors. The later Guptas and the Maukharis though tolerant of Buddhism were followers of Brāhmaṇism and this consistent feature had certainly led to the gradual decline of Buddhism which is clearly noticed by Yuan Chwang. The Pālas certainly by their direct patronage to Buddhism appear to have contributed to the arrest of the decline of Buddhism. But there is no doubt that inner vitality of Buddhism was fast disappearing. Over and above these internal causes, the Muslim vandalism of the thirteenth century A.D. was undoubtedly very much responsible for the ultimate extermination of Buddhism from Bihar, resulting in the flight of monks with their manuscripts to Nepal and Tibet; but the actual basic causes for the disappearance were more internal than external.

JAINISM

It is very difficult to determine the antiquity of Jainism. "The Yajurveda mentions the name of three Tīrthaṅkaras, Rishabha, Ajitanātha and Arishtanemi. According to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Rishabha was the founder of Jainism. Even the Jains believe that their system had previously been proclaimed through countless ages by each one of a succession of great teachers."[3] In the beginning of the historical period Jains had their stronghold in Bihar. Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara, preached and got Nirvāṇa at Pārasnātha Hill (in Hazaribagh district) as is traditionally known.[4] The last prophet of Jainism was Mahāvīra who was born in Vaiśālī and died in village Pāwā in Patna district.

Mahāvīra first entered the order of Pārśvanātha, but left it after a year perhaps because of differences on the question of renunciation and possession of personal articles. Mahāvīra stressed asceticism and complete abandonment of all possessions, including clothings, whereas Pārśvanātha had stressed that some covering was a necessity and he never was in favour of extreme renunciation. These differences widened at the time of Bhadrabāhu and resulted in two broad divisions in Jainism known as Svetāmbara (white-clothed) and Digambara (atmosphere-clad, i.e., nude)[5].

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[1] Many bronze and stone images of the Buddha found in Bihar are crowned and belong to Pāla period. Nālandā and Patna Museums possess many such images.

[2] *Indian Theism*, p. 65.

[3] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 287.

[4] Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteers (Hazaribagh district), 1917, p. 205.

[5] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I, p. 109.

Digambaras had their hold in Bihar. The Chinese pilgrim, Yuan Chwang, has mentioned in his 'Records'[1] that the Digambaras were flourishing when he visited the state. The Siddhas also refer to the naked Jain monks.[2] This fact is attested to by the few images of Tīrthaṅkaras which have been found at different places in Bihar.[3] However, excepting a few images, there is a great paucity of Jain records in Bihar belonging to this period. Judged from these scanty records, it appears that Jainism did not enjoy the same extent of popularity as the contemporary religions, such as Buddhism, Śaivism, Vaishṇavism, etc. Nevertheless, with the help of the few records available, we get an idea of the state of Jainism, as it existed during the period under review.

First, it is necessary to examine why there are so few records of this religion available here. Jainism in the beginning might have obtained the support of some of the early kings of Magadha and Kalinga such as Nanda, Chandragupta Maurya and Khāravela, but it did not receive direct royal patronage from the beginning of the Christian era down to the period under review. The royal patronage to a religion certainly helps its propagation to a great deal. In Bihar the Gupta rulers were generally followers of Vaishṇavism, whereas the Pāla rulers were Buddhists and Śaśāṅka was a Śaiva. We know of no king in Bihar during this period who subscribed to the faith of Jainism. Thus, Jainism lacked the great advatage of royal patronage. Majumdar rightly points out that "with the dominance of Buddhism, Jainism lost its stronghold in Eastern India."[4]

Mahāvīra had stressed asceticism much and only through it, according to him, one could attain salvation. His great message to mankind was that "family and caste are nothing, Karma is everything, and the future happiness depends on it." He further said that on practising asceticism, Karma could be burnt up, and then one could become a Tīrthaṅkara.[5] This stress on austerity and penances could not be easily followed and appreciated by the common people, especially when there existed a more liberal religion like Buddhism. Jainism stuck to its old principles and did not march with the time. This may be another powerful reason for the comparatively lesser prevalence of Jainism in the State of Bihar.

During this period, the centre of Jainism continued to move gradually west towards Gujarat, owing to the conversion and patronage of the Western kings. Consequently the great council of Jainism was convened not in the historical land of its birth, Bihar, but in the western country at Valabhi.[6] All these instances go to show that Jainism during this period had lost its

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[1] Watters, ii, pp. 63, 184, 187.
[2] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, p. 2, vs. 5, 6.
"Dīhnakkha jai maline beseṅ, ṇggala hoi upādia keseṅ,
Khavaṇehin Jāna viḍaṁbi-a besin, appaṇa bāhira mokkha ubeseṅ."
[3] Infra, p. 104.
[4] *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. iv, p. 44.
[5] Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 39.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 13.

importance and appeal in Bihar. The scanty records of Jainism found here during the Gupta period also confirm this conclusion.

The installation of Jain images during this period, under the patronage of the reigning kings[1] prove that image worship was prevalent among the Jains. It was an ancient practice in Jainism. Epigraphic evidence also seems to prove that this practice of image worship was current among the Jains in Eastern India even in the pre-Mauryan times. There is a positive evidence in the Hāthigumphā Inscription[2] of the removal of a Jain image from Kaliṅga to Pāṭaliputra by the Magadha king, Nanda, at the time of his invasion of Kaliṅga and its subsequent recovery by the Chedi King, Khāravela, who invaded Magadha in the 1st century B.C. From Jain philosophy we learn that there is no place for god in their religion. The objects of their worship are neither gods nor goddesses, but man,....the venerable (Arhat), the conqueror (Jina), the founder of the four orders (Tīrthaṅkara).[3]

The Jain laity who had been drawn away from Hinduism by Mahāvīra, found themselves left without any object of worship. Therefore, gradually reverence for their masters and other teachers (historical and mythical) passed into adoration and took the form of a regular cult. Finally, images of these personages were set up for worship and idolatry became one of the chief institutions of orthodox Jainism. Among the images which have been found in Bihar, the most common are those of Rishabhadeva, Pārśvanātha, Mahāvīra and Śāntinātha who are identified by their symbolic marks. For example, Rishabhadeva is always associated with bull whereas Pārśvanātha is shown sitting under the canopy of a snake-hood and Mahāvīra's symbol of identification is a lion and a wheel.

Practically no Jain inscription has been found in Bihar during the Gupta period. The Kahaum Stone Pillar Inscription[4] of Skanda Gupta, though a Jain one, is found in Uttar Pradesh. Of the Pāla period, we have found very few Jain inscriptions in this State. Only one has been found at Nālandā and assigned to the reign of Rājyapāla.[5] This inscription is incised on a pillar of a ruined Jain temple. The object of the inscription is to record the visit of one Vaidanātha, son of Manoratha of the merchant family, to the temple in the reign of the illustrious Rājyapāla. This inscription does not throw any light on the condition of Jainism in the State of Bihar except that Bihar was still a place of pilgrimage for outsiders. This fact is further corroborated by the existence of another temple at Rājgir, where some of the images of the Tīrthaṅkaras were installed by some teachers called Vasantanandi and Thiroka.[6] From the inscriptions engraved on the pedestal of some images, this temple can be assigned to the 8th century A.D.

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, pp. 67, 259.
[2] *E.I.*, xx, p. 77.
[3] Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, p. xiv.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 65.
[5] I.A., xlvii, p. 111.
[6] Ghosh, *A Guide to Nālandā*, p. 11.

Thus it is found that, though Jainism was not patronised by any ruling dynasty, it was not altogether dead in its place of origin, viz., Bihar. People had respect for this religion. Jain images[1] discovered in the districts of Singhbhum, Manbhum, Patna and Shahabad point out that Jainism continued to have adherents in different parts of Bihar. Even today, unlike Buddhism, Jainism is not extinct in the land of its birth. Perhaps, there are specific reasons, as pointed out by Mrs. Stevenson,[2] which saved it from extinction in Bihar. She writes, "It has never cut itself off from the faith that surrounded it. Jains always employed Brāhmaṇas as their domestic chaplains, who presided at birth rites and often acted as officials at death and marriage ceremonies and temple worship. So when the storm of persecution by the Mohammadans swept over Bihar, Jainism simply took refuge in Hinduism, which opened its capacious bosom to receive it."[3] Jainism compromised with Hindu caste practices and winked at the worship of some Hindu deities like Ganeśa.[4] Vāsudeva and Baladeva are two of the sixty-three Śalāka-purushas, who are believed to be the directors of the course of the world[5]. Rishabhadeva the first Tīrthaṅkara is regarded as an Avatāra of Vishṇu.[6]

BRĀHMAṆISM

Brāhmaṇism, or loosely called Hinduism, marked phenomenal progress in the period under review. With the advent of the Śuṅgas to power, after the overthrow of the Mauryan dynasty, Brāhmaṇism obtained royal patronage, and this continued with great enthusiasm in the Gupta period. The later Guptas, the Maukharis, the Gauḍas being followers of Brāhmaṇical faith, helped in the progress of Brāhmaṇism in many ways. Temples dedicated to various deities were erected, images of gods were installed, Brāhmaṇical sacrifices were performed and gifts and honour to Brāhmaṇas were lavishly offered. Besides this the Digvijaya of Śaṅkarāchārya certainly accelerated the pace of the decline of Buddhism and gave new vigour and confidence to Brāhmaṇism. Various orders of Sanyāsins like Ekadaṇḍi and Tridaṇḍi were active in Eastern India,[7] and propagated Brāhmaṇic religion and philosophy. Many Gupta emperors like Samudra Gupta and Kumāra Gupta performed horse-sacrifices. Later Gupta king Kumāra Gupta performed the supreme sacrifice of immolating himself in fire at the holy place Prayāga.[8] Mithilā remained

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[1] Patna Museum possesses these collections of Jain images.

[2] Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 18; It may be pointed out that even today Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍas of Rājgir are employed to offer Pujā in the Jain-temples, some of which are situated on the hills.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. iv, p. 49.

[5] *ibid.*, p. 129.

[6] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, quoted in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. iv, p. 134.

[7] Sarahapā observes—"Ekadaṇḍi, Tridaṇḍi, Bha-a-niva Beseṅ." (Bhagawa-three dresses of the Sanyāsin.)—*Dohākosha*, p. 2, v. 2.

[8] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, p. 205.

the religious and philosophical centre of Brāhmaṇism and held its own against Buddhist scholasticism.[1] Most of the major Purāṇas which gave practically final shape to modern Hinduism, were finally edited in this period. The most predominant feature of Brāhmaṇism from the very beginning of the period was the Bhakti cult, which centred round the worship of one's Ishṭadeva. Naturally, therefore, Brāhmaṇism had branched off into many cults like Vaishṇavism, Śaivism etc. on the basis of the different major cult deities. The origin of the Bhakti cult can be traced even to Vedic literature, though the presence of numerous images of worship in the early Indus valley civilisations may suggest its beginning even in the pre-Vedic period. It would not be relevant here to discuss in detail the origin of the Bhakti cult movement and various cults based on Bhakti. It may safely be said that long before the beginning of the Gupta dynasty, different Brāhmaṇical cults had already registered considerable progress and distinction. It would, therefore, be proper to discuss separately the state of the various Brāhmaṇical cults during the period under review.

I. Vaishṇavism

"Vaishṇavism is the name given to the Bhakti religion which recognises Vishṇu, also called Bhāgawata, Purushottama, Nārāyaṇa, Hari, as the sole God. He is defined as the unborn (Aja), and the Eternal (Śāśvata). He is the creator (Dhātā), the embodiment of immortality (Amritam), the father and the mother and the Eternal receptor of the universe."[2]

Worship of Vishṇu is as old as the Rigveda, though here He is not one of the great gods, but one of the manifestations of the Sun.[3] He was in the Vedic period eminently a god of sacrifice (Yajña). The predominant feature of Bhāgavatism or Vaishṇavism is devotion to Vishṇu or Vāsudeva.[4] Reference to Bhaktas of Vishṇu is traced in the Rigvedic hymn mentioning Sūris,[5]

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[1] Infra, p. 169.

[2] Ray Chaudhuri, *The Early History of the Vaishṇava Sect*, p. 10.

[3] *Rv.* i. 155. 6. Vishṇu's three steps representing the Sun's diurnal course (morning, noon and the evening) or representing the Sun's march over the Universe through air, sky and the earth, supplied the basis for the Epic and Purāṇic Bali and Vāmana legend. Wheel in one of the hands of Vishṇu represents the Sun. Vishṇu's association with the bird Garuḍa may have been derived from the description of a winged celestial bird in Vedic passages.

[4] The *Brihatsaṁhitā* of Varāhamibira, refers to the Bhaktas of Vāsudeva and defines Bhāgavata as one devoted to the worship of Vishṇu. (*Brihatsaṁhitā*, lxix-lxx).

[5] *Rv.* i. 22. 20—Here reference to the highest of three steps of Vishṇu as Paramapada, visible only to the Sūris might have led to the later conception of Vishṇupāda (one is in Gəyā) usually on the top of hills, as the abode of Vishṇu. Barnett, on the Vedic evidences of Vishṇu's association with Indra in latter's war-exploits, suggested that to Vishṇu was transformed by the devotees of Vishṇu the heroic qualities of Indra—*Hindu Gods and Heroes*, p. 41.

as a class favoured by Vishṇu. Scholars appear to be on surer grounds about the development of Bhakti doctrine when they refer to the use of Vāsudevaka and Arjunaka in Ashṭadhyāyi[1] of Pāṇini, meaning a person whose object of Bhakti is Vāsudeva, and a person whose object of virtue is Arjuna[2] respectively. Ray Chaudhuri is of the opinion that Pāṇini here uses the word 'Bhakti' in regard to Vāsudeva in the sense of religious adoration.[3]

Worship of Vishṇu is attested to by Curtius who mentions that the Paurava army carried a statue of Herakles (Vāsudeva-Krishṇa) as it advanced against Alexander's army.[4] Megasthenes (4th century B.C.) also says that the Saurasanoi, i.e., the people of the Mathurā region, held Herakles, who was the Greek counterpart of Vāsudeva-Krishṇa,[5] in great esteem. It may be thus accepted that the Vāsudeva cult was prevalent in the 4th century B.C. 'Chhāndogya Upanishad' refers to sage Vāsudeva-Krishṇa as the founder of this cult.[6] In the Mahābhārata and the Bhagavadgītā probably a work of the third century B.C., Vāsudeva-Krishṇa is identified with the highest God.

Towards the end of the 2nd century B.C. Bhāgavatism further progressed. The Besnagar Pillar Inscription[7] refers to Heliodorus, the Greek Ambassador of the Indo-Greek king, Antialcidas, as a devotee of Vāsudeva, who erected a Garuḍadhvaja in Besnagar or modern Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh. It has been suggested that shrines or Dhvajas were also erected here and dedicated to Saṁkarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba as well. Together with Vāsudeva they constitute the five Vrishṇī-Vīras.[8] Mora-well Inscription of Mahākshatrapa Śoḍāsa (belonging to the early years of the 1st century A.D.) proves the existence of images (Pratimā) of Vāsudeva (Bhāgavata) and the Vrishṇī Pañchavīras[9] in Mathurā region. Banerjea has shown that Lakshmī (the consort of Vishṇu) is represented in the Gaja-Lakshmī form on some tribal coins of Ayodhya, Ujjayinī series, and also on coins of foreign rulers like Azes, Azilises, Rajuvula, Śoḍāsa.[10] On a gold coin of Huvishka is represented the composite figure of Hari-hara (Vishṇu-Śiva), who in his four hands has Triśula, Vajra, Chakra and probably a goat or antelope (not distinct).[11] On one of the coins of the so-called Pañchāla Mitra Series issued by Vishṇumitra, belonging to the 1st century B.C., there is the figure of Vāsudeva-Vishṇu.[12] Sircar also points out the presence of

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[1] *Ashṭadhyāyi*, iv, 3, 98.
[2] J.R.A.S., 1910, p. 168.
[3] Ray Chaudhuri, *Early History of Vaishṇavism*, pp. 30, ff.
[4] M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, pp. 208-9.
[5] M'Crindle, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 206.
[6] *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, iii, 17, 6.
[7] A.S.I., 1908-09, p. 128.
[8] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), p. 104.
[9] *E.I.*, xxiv, pp. 194 ff. Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), p. 93.
[10] *ibid.*, pp. 110-11.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 123.
[12] *ibid.*, pp. 129-30.

Vishṇu figure on a copper coin of Huvishka.[1]

All these evidences summarised above certainly point to the antiquity and the continuity of the Vāsudeva cult, but it is to be borne in mind that practically all of these refer to regions far west of Eastern India (Eastern U.P., Bihar and Bengal). It is no doubt true that Bhandarkar has directed our attention to the mention of worshippers of Vāsudeva with devotees of other deities in Niddesa which would suggest that the worship of Vāsudeva was practised in Central and Eastern India during the time of the Buddha.[2] But there appears to be no escape from the conclusion, in view of the evidences available up till now that the cult of Vāsudeva-Vishṇu did not gain much headway in Eastern India. Kauṭilya, Aśoka and the author of Aṅguttara-Nikāya do not mention it. It appears that the centre of the cult of Vāsudeva-Vishṇu was the Mathurā region from as early as the 4th century B.C. as mentioned by Curtius and Megasthenes. Of course Bhāgavatism was growing in strength and popularity.

It is with the rise of the Guptas[3] that Bhāgavatism received great impetus in Bihar. The literary, numismatic and epigraphic evidences show that the Guptas were the followers of Bhāgavata religion; and they styled themselves 'Paramabhāgavata,' from the time of Chandra Gupta II onwards. During their rule, because of royal patronage it received, Bhāgavatism spread to the distant corners of India. This is proved by the numerous inscriptions and sculptures discovered at various places in India. Mehrauli Pillar Inscription of Chandra, (who is generally identified with Chandra Gupta II) refers to the erection of an iron pillar as the lofty standard of divine Vishṇu.[4]

In Bihar the discovery of a large number of Vaishṇavite images in different forms indicate that Bhāgavatism was widely prevalent there. Vishṇu's images of the Gupta period are represented as holding a mace in the upper right hand and a lotus in the lower, while in the upper left hand he holds the wheel and in the lower one, the conch. According to Banerjea,[5] the worship of emblems or symbols representing Vishṇu was also common in Vaishṇavism during the Gupta period; and wheel, conch and the combination of the wheel and the conch were usually taken to be the emblems of Vishṇu. Such emblems of Vishṇu have been found on some of the seals discovered from the

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[1] *Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 439; Banerjea thinks the figure to be of Śiva—*Development of the Hindu Iconography*, (2nd Ed.), p. 130.

[2] Bhandarkar, *Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and other Minor Religious Systems*, p. 3.

[3] On the authority of *Mañju-Śrī-mūla-Kalpa*, Jayaswal places the original home of the Guptas in Mathurā region (*Imperial History of India*, pp. 52-53, vs. 758-60). Sinha has also strongly argued the Western U.P. as the home of the Guptas (J.B.R.S., xxxvii, pt. 3-4; J.B.R.S., xxxviii, pt. 3-4). The Gupta ruling dynasty might have later made Magadha their home and centre of activities. Their association with Mathurā region or Western U.P. may generally explain their devotion to Vaishṇavism. This was bound to have impact on Bihar on their coming to power there.

[4] Fleet, op. cit., p. 142.

[5] Banerjea, *The Development of the Hindu Iconography* (1st ed.), p. 195.

excavations at Basarh[1] (the ancient Vaiśālī). The worship of the foot-prints of wooden shoes (Pādukās) of Nārāyaṇa or Vishṇu is well known. The Vishṇupāda temple of Gayā is a famous seat of pilgrimage for Hindus all over India. Bharata's worship of the Pādukās of Rāma, everybody knows. The Pādukās symbolised the worship of Vishṇu. Pādukās are represented on seals discovered from Vaiśālī (Basarh)[2]. One has the legend Śrī Nārāyaṇasya (Seal of Nārāyaṇa). These prove the symbolic worship of Vishṇu. Symbolic worship of Vishṇu and other Brāhmaṇical deities reminds us of the symbolic worship of the Buddha in the early Buddhist sculptures when the Buddha was not represented in human form. On the coins of the Gupta Kings, we have Chakra and Garuḍa standards representing Vaishṇavite symbols. Lakshmī, the consort of Vishṇu, is represented on the coins. The Chakra-Vikrama type of coins represent the deified personification of Vishṇu's weapon (Chakra), and from this Chakrapurusha, Chandra Gupta II is receiving Prasādas.[3]

Images representing Vishṇu with his Āyudhapurushas or of his incarnation have been found in Bihar. A large and beautiful image of Vishṇu discovered from Masarh in the Shahabad district, belonging to the Gupta period is preserved in the Patna Museum.[4] Another four-handed Vishṇu with halo round his head has been found in Benisagar in the Singhbhum district in Bihar. Two of his hands hold conch and lotus, and the other two hands are resting on male and female figures representing Chakra and Gadā.[5] Another image of the Varāha incarnation of Vishṇu is also a priceless acquisition of the Patna Museum.[6] In one of the terra-cotta seals discovered at Basarh, a remarkable figure of recumbent boar is depicted (on the seal No. 54) which, according to Banerjea,[7] represents the Varāha Avatāra of Vishṇu. The seal No. 191[8] depicts the figure of Nrisimha, the man-lion incarnation of Vishṇu, which according to Spooner, "provides us with our datable representation of the deity Nrisimha in India." In this connection, we may remind ourselves of the reference to the setting up of Krishṇa's image, as a form or incarnation of Vishṇu on the Barābar Hill (Pravaragiri) by the Maukhari Chief, Anantavarman (5th-6th Century A.D.).[9] This is the earliest image of Krishṇa in Magadha. (We do not know if the image is still there; most probably not).

The most salient feature of Vaishṇavism in the Gupta period is the worship of Lakshmī, who had only a minor place in the early Vashṇavite

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[1] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 111, seal Nos. 32 and 34, pl. xli; *ibid.*, 1913-14, Nos. 61 and 73, pl. xlvi have a conch on the seal; No. 275 has a wheel and a conch on either side, p. 139.

[2] *ibid.*, 1913-14, p. 114, No. 489; p. 145, No. 535.

[3] Altekar, *Catalogue of the Beyana Hoard*, p. 208, Type No. 1192.

[4] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 6488.

[5] *ibid.*, No. 6361; cf. J.B.R.S., 1954, p. 413.

[6] *ibid.*, No. 8428.

[7] Banerjea, *The Development of the Hindu Iconography* (1st ed.), p. 207; A.S.R., 1913-14, p. 126, pl. xlvi, No. 54.

[8] A.S.R., 1913-14, p. 133, pl. xlvi.

[9] Fleet, op. cit., pp. 222-223.

pantheon.[1] Lakshmī was regarded as the Goddess of wealth and sovereignty. The Junagadh Inscription of Skanda Gupta mentions Vishṇu as a perpetual resort of Lakshmī, who is represented as Vāsudeva's wife in the Sārnath Inscription of Prakaṭāditya.[2] In the Apshad Inscription of Ādityaseṇa, Damodara is spoken of as the slayer of demons, and the feet of Mādhava, son of Vāsudeva, as graced by the attentions of Śrī. She is frequently depicted in the Gupta seals and coins. In these seals she is shown standing in the midst of a group of trees with elephants pouring water over her. Sometimes she is shown accompanied by two dwarfish attendants holding objects like money bags.[3] But in some specimens the attendants are absent.[4] The Nālandā specimens[5] are also of the same types. The seal of the office of the Rājagriha Vishaya has a standing halved Gajalakshmī flanked by an elephant and corpulent seated-male figure. There are a flagstaff in a pot and flowers on sides. The corpulent figure may be that of a Yaksha. Another seal has standing Gajalakshmī on lotus, flanked by a seated male figure on either side and on the top on either side an elephant is consecrating with raised trunks.[6] Another seal shows the clear connection between Lakshmī and Wealth whose deity she is. The seal shows Lakshmī standing with an elephant on each side of her head showering water on her. Her right hand is on a money bag or box and her left hand is raised to shoulder and holds a lotus (?). On each side is shown a standing male figure guarding the money bag or box kept at the side of the Goddess.[7] They are probably Yakshas. Such a representation of Lakshmī is known as Gajalakshmī. Lakshmī particularly as the Goddess of wealth and trade, the most important means of acquiring wealth, is remarkably depicted in a seal belonging to the Gupta period and found in Basarh. It has the representation of the lower part of a large trading ship or barge with prow to the left; towards the stem is a long oar crossing the three decks. The boat has many standards, and there is a platform on the barge on which sits a goddess with her left hand on the hip and right arm raised. She is wearing diaphanous clothes, characteristic of the Gupta period. On her left is a conch, and farther left is probably a winged lion.[8] The deity is Lakshmī; conch shows her connection with Vishṇu. The lion was the vehicle of Lakshmī as we find on the Chandra Gupta—Kumāradevī type of coins and on the seal of Dhruvaswāminī found at Vaiśālī. Standing Lakshmī clasping a lotus stalk is also represented on another Gupta seal from Basarh.[9] Seals with 'Ghaṭa' or 'Kalaśa,' generally with foliage coming out, also probably represent Lakshmī, the Goddess of Plenty and fruits. Seals with Kalaśa are

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[1] *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*, ii, 5, p. 254.
[2] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 286.
[3] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 10, Seal No. 3.
[4] *ibid.*, Seal No. 4.
[5] M.A.S.I., No.66, p. 45; S.I. 798, 198, 804, 813, 817, 808, 691 etc., p. 51.
[6] *ibid.*, pl. v. k.
[7] *ibid.*, pp. 51-52.
[8] A.S.R., 1913-14, pp. 129-30, No. 93, pl. xlvi.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 140, No. 312.

numerous in Vaiśālī.[1] On one type of gold coins of Skanda Gupta there is representation of Lakshmī with her devotee Skanda Gupta.[2]

In the Pāla period, Vaishṇavism continued to flourish. In some images of the Pāla period, there are the representations of his ten incarnations round the main figure of Vishṇu who is represented either with Lakshmī and Sarasvatī or Āyudhapurushas. Three beautiful specimens of such images are preserved in the Patna Museum.[3] However, separate representations of the ten incarnations without the central figure of Vishṇu are by no means rare. It is interesting to note that in one of these representations at Konch[4] (in the Gayā district), the figure of the Buddha, the ninth incarnation is absent. Images of the Boar-incarnation alone are also to be found at many places in Bihar. One was found in the ruins of Nālandā by Broadley and was transferred to Calcutta.[5] Recently, G.D. College Bulletin[6] No. 2 has published accounts of one such image. The images of Balarāma or Halādhara, the eighth Avatāra of Vishṇu, have also been discovered in Bihar.[7]

II. Śaivism

Śaivism is the worship of God 'Śiva.' It can be traced back to a very early period. Marshall has found prototype of Śiva and Liṅga symbols as well in the Indus Valley.[8] In the Rigvedic literature, Rudra is frequently mentioned.[9] He was supposed to be the God of destruction[10] and later on people began to worship him for protection. As the protector of animals and cattle, he is represented as Paśupati.[11] In numerous hymns in the Atharvaveda, Rudra has been associated with Vrātya, who is intimately connected with Magadha. However, it was the amalgamation of Vedic Rudra, the atmospheric God and the Proto-historic anthropomorphic male deity of the Harappa culture which led to the evolution of the Śiva deity. Yaduvansi has collected together a large number of evidences to show that various myths and legends associated with Śiva arose from the references or imageries in the Vedic literature and from Rudra's absorption of the pre-Aryan male deity[12]—prototype of Śiva. Later we find in the Ashṭadhyāyi references to Rudra and his titles Bhava and Śarva.[13] Megasthenes refers to the worship of Śiva.[14] Kauṭilya refers to the construction of a shrine of Śiva together with shrines of other deities in the

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[1] A.S.R.,1913-14, p. 142, No. 364.
[2] Allan, *Cat. of the Gupta Coins*, p. xlviii.
[3] Patna Museum Arch. Nos. 10609, 10610 and 6361.
[4] A.S.R., 1901-02, p. 13.
[5] A.S.I. (N.I.S.), vol. xlvii, pp. 103-04, pl. xiv.
[6] G.D. College Bulletin, Series No. 2, p. 18 with plate.
[7] Ghosh, *A Guide to Nālandā*, p. 32; Patna Museum Arch. No. 9791 (This is found at Kurkihar and the image is of bronze).
[8] Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilisation*, I, p. 52.
[9] *Rv.* I. 143, 6; II. 33; I. 43; VI. 74.
[10] Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Rigveda*, p. 147, Av. vi. 90, 1.
[11] *Rv.*, I. 114. 9.
[12] Yaduvansi, *Saivamat*, pp. 1-38 ff.
[13] *Ashṭadhyāyi*, I. 49; 3. 53, 4. 100.
[14] Elliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. ii, pp. 137-38.

centre of the city.[1] In the Śvetāśvatara Upanishad, Yaduvansi sees a hint of the rise of Bhaktism in relation to Śiva as well as Vishṇu.[2] In the Epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, Śaivism is a fully developed and established sect. Śiva is a bestower of boons.[3] Arjuna obtained Paśupata weapon by worshipping Śiva.[4] In the Mahābhāshya there are references to Śiva and his devotees Śiva-Bhāgavatas.[5] Jayaswal refers to a gold plaque in Jalan collection which according to him has figures of Śiva and Gaurī, and this plaque he dates in the Mauryan period, which is very doubtful.[6] Bull as Śiva's symbol is represented on some of the early Yaudheya and Arjunāyana coins as has been noticed by Allan.[7] Allan and Banerjea have drawn our attention to representation of Liṅga on pedestal on some coins.[8] Pañchāla king Rudra Gupta has Triśūla within railing on his coins.[9] Banerjea has correctly identified the male standing figure on coins from Ujjayini as Śiva.[10] Śaivism appears to have been popular with foreign kings ruling in India, and Śiva or Śaiva symbols are found on the coins of Maues, Gondophares, Kadphises, Kanishka and Vāsudeva.[11] The god is generally depicted as one faced or three faced with two hands. There are references to the Pāśupatas and Liṅga worship in earlier literature. Our attention has been drawn to the reference to a combined image of Śiva and Durgā or Ardhanāriśvara belonging to the 3rd century A.D.[12]

Thus it is clear that Śaivism and its various sub-cults had by the beginning of the Gupta period been fully developed, and Śiva's images and various symbols were objects of worship. But because of the lack of adequate records, it is difficult to state the actual condition of Śaivism in Bihar during the period under review. This absence of records may be attributed to the fact that Śaivism did not receive the direct patronage of any ruler of this State. However, it did receive royal patronage during the reign of Śaśāṅka, who ruled over Bihar only for a very short period. Actually he was a native of Karṇasuvarṇa in Bengal. But in prevalent atmosphere of religious toleration, although Śaivism did not get direct royal patronage, it did receive sympathetic treatment from the rulers who were followers of different faiths. For example, the Guptas, though they themselves were Vaishṇavas, constructed temples of Śiva and gave donations. Likewise, the Pālas, though Buddhists,

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[1] Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra* (3rd Ed.), Book II, Ch. iv, p. 54.
[2] Yaduvansi, *Śaivamat*, pp. 41-56.
[3] *Rāmāyaṇa*, Bālakāṇḍa, 36, 9-10.
[4] *Mbh.*, Vanaparva, 87 and after.
[5] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), p. 449-50.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 96, footnote 1.
[7] Banerjea thinks that it may be a sacrificial bull tied to the Yupa. (Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), p. 109-10.
[8] *ibid.*, pp. 113-14.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 115.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 117.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 118 ff.
[12] *ibid.*, p. 89.

also made grants and constructed Śiva temples.[1] Common people appear to have carried on the worship of Śiva in the form of their choice uninterrupted. And we find many representations of Śiva images or symbols on seals which belong to the period under review. Images of Śiva found in Bihar constitute the main source for determining the position of Śaivism in this state. The Brāhmaṇic literature refers to some aspects of Śaivism. According to the Hindu literature,[2] there are two main aspects of Śiva. In the first form he is called Mahādeva or Śambhu, a god of mild dispcsition, and in the second form he is known as the fiercely tempered Bhairava or Rudra. The Mahādeva or Śambhu form represents goodness (Śivam) and a state of 'Guṇātīta' or a state of being above the attributes. His Rudra form may be taken as the destructive power of the Universe. The bull is the Vāhana of Śiva, and on a seal discovered at Basarh is a fine humped bull reclining to the left, and is symbolic of the cult of Śiva,[3] as Triśūla is another of Śiva's characteristic symbols.

Śiva in the Mahādeva form bestows blessings. In this form, he is described as wearing a crescent-moon on the head. He possesses a third eye on the forehead. He carries a trident, a bow, a horn etc. in his hand. According to the Matsya-Purāṇa[4] he has serpents as ornaments. He is described variously as possessing four, eight, ten, or even twelve hands. A very interesting image of Śiva has been discovered in Nālandā. On a seal of a Janapada there is a two-armed deity seated on a lion holding 'triśūla' in the left; the right hand is in Varada-mudrā.[5]

In his other form (viz., Bhairava or Rudra), he is described in the Agni-Purāṇa[6] as possessing a grim face with protruding teeth, a pot belly and wearing a garland of skulls. He has plaited hair and many hands. His trident, the garland of skulls and also the cobras are the very symbols of destruction. His destructive (Rudra or Bhairava) form is born when crime is committed. Thus it is evident that he was worshipped in both the forms.

The archaeological finds in Bihar, however, do not contain separate images of the two forms of Śiva. Images found here are mostly composite ones of Śiva with Pārvatī or Umā.[7] It is, in this connection, important to note that in as early as later vedic texts Rudra is associated with a female named

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[1] Dharmapāla, at the request of his Mahāsāmantādhipati Nārāyaṇavarman granted four villages to a temple of the God Nunna Narayaṇa, which was founded by Nārāyaṇavarman at Subhasthali.—*E.*I., iv, p. 254.

[2] Bhattacharya, *Indian Images*, vol. i, p. 20.

[3] A.S.R., 1913-14, pl. 126, seal No. 63, pl. xlvi.

[4] *Matsya Purāṇa* (Quoted from Bhattacharya, *Indian Images*, vol. i, p. 20).

[5] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 47, pl. v(c).

[6] Quoted from Bhattacharya, *Indian Images*, vol. i, p. 20.

[7] Patna Museum, Arch. Nos. 6363, 6047, 1583, 10648, 6837; Kurkihar Bronzes preserved in the Patna Museum, Arch. Nos. 9624, 9772. Ghosh, *A Guide to Nālandā*, p. 32, G.D. College Bulletin No. 2, p. 18.

'Ambikā.'[1] In the Rig and Atharvavedas there is no other male deity so exclusively associated with a female deity.[2] In the early Indus valley religion also, as in other ancient civilisations the male deity (prototype of Historic Śiva) was associated with a female deity. In the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, Śiva and his consort are generally invoked together.[3] It seems that Tāntricism modified the original idea of worship and led to the introduction of combined images of Śiva with his female energy. These images throw a flood of light on Śaivism in Bihar. The abundance of composite images of Śiva and Pārvatī indicate that the Śaivites worshipped Śiva in Tāntric form, the characteristic of which was the popularisation of Śakti worship. The sculptors of this period carved out different types of combined images of Śiva and Pārvatī. The most popular among them is the 'Umā-Maheśvara' or 'Śiva-Pārvatī'[4] type of images. In such images, we find Umā or Pārvatī with her right hand placed on the right shoulder of her consort and is seated in the Ālińgana or Sukhāsana pose on the left thigh of Śiva. Śiva has four arms and is elaborately dressed and ornamented and seated on a high Āsana. His right leg rests on the back of a bull (his Vāhana). The upper hand to the right grasps some object[5] which is not very clear, while the other rests playfully on the chin of the goddess. His lower hand on the opposite side passes round the body of the goddess and supports her left breast. The one above it grasps a trident entwined by a cobra. The right hand of the goddess passes round his neck, while the left rests on the right knee.[6] Her vāhana (lion) is represented there, on whose back her right leg rests.

A few rare images depicting the marriage scene of Śiva and Pārvatī, generally known as 'Kalyāṇa-Sundara' image in South India, have been found in Bihar.[7] In these specimens, Śiva and Pārvatī stand side by side and not in front of one another, Pārvatī standing to his left. The right hand of Pārvatī is placed in one of the right hands of Śiva. The latter has four hands and holds a round object in the upper right hand, and Pārvatī's right hand in the lower one; he also holds a trident in the upper left hand while the lower one rests on his left thigh. Pārvatī holds an indistinct object in her left hand which may be a mirror. Between these two figures is to be found Brahmā with four heads and two hands, seated on the ground. On the pedestal the lion, the Vāhana of Pārvatī, appears on the right whereas the couchant bull of Śiva, on the left. Between them, the front of the pedestal is occupied by a kneeling female and a dancing male, evidently a Preta. There are also three

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[1] *Yv.*, Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā (III. 57); Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa (1, 6, 10, 4-5). In the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka she is mentioned as the consort of Śiva.

[2] Yaduvansi, *Śaivamat*, p. 14.

[3] *ibid.*, pp. 59-66.

[4] See Plate 61.

[5] In some images the object is lotus.

[6] In some cases she holds a mirror.

[7] Banerji, *Eastern School of Mediaeval Sculpture*, A.S.I. (N.I.S.), vol. xlvii, pp. 113-114, pl. xcv (c); Patna Museum, Arch. Nos. 6047, 10648.

dancing musicians, two of them are playing on drums while the third plays on cymbals.

Images of this period also reveal that Śiva and Pārvatī were also worshipped in the composite form known as Ardhanārīśvara. One half of such an image represents Śiva and the other Pārvatī or Umā. Śiva has plaited hair, a crescent and a trident, while Umā is shown to have parted hair. One of the earliest representations of the Ardhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva in art and certainly the earliest known so far in Bihar, is found depicted on a seal[1] discovered at the excavations at Basarh which Spooner failed to identify correctly.[2] In the Vadāttikā cave (one of the Nāgārjuni-Barābara hill caves) the Maukhari king Anantavarman is reported to have set up an image of Ardhanārīśvara.[3] The Skanda Purāṇa[4] mentions that on one occasion Pārvatī asked Śiva, "Let me reside with you all the while embracing you limb by limb." Thus the form of Śiva became androgynous and in due course of time this composite form of Śiva became an object of worship.

Śiva was also worshipped in the form of Hari-hara, a composite image of Śiva and Vishṇu. In the Matsya Purāṇa, there is reference to a composite image of Vishṇu and Śiva.[5] Such images have been discovered at many places in Bihar.[6] One half of such an image represents Śiva with trident and the other Vishṇu with wheel. The Liṅga Purāṇa[7] narrates a story that Vishṇu had been to the Dāruvana in the guise of a woman and then they became one. However, this shows that Śaivism was very intimate with Vaishṇavism and the spirit of mutual respect of each other's deity led to the evolution of the conception of a joint deity like Hari-hara, to be worshipped by both the sects.

Discoveries of a large number of Śiva-Liṅgas in Bihar belonging to this period, remind us also of the phallic cult in Śaivism. Mohenjodaro discoveries[8] have thrown considerable light on the early prevalence of the cult of the Liṅga and Yoni and this read with reference to Śishṇadevas or the worshippers of Phallus in the Rigveda, become all the more significant. Diverse opinions have been expressed in regard to the origin and antiquity of the Liṅga cult. In view of the discoveries in the Indus Valley, the opinion of Bhandarkar[9] that the "Liṅga worship had not come into use at the time of Patañjali, because verse 3. 99 refers to an image or likeness (Pratikriti) of Śiva

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[1] A.S.R., 1913-14, p. 152, pl. 1, seal No. 764.

[2] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (1st ed.), p. 198. In the *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260, there is reference to such an image.

[3] Pires, *The Maukharis*, p. 176.

[4] *Skanda Purāṇa*, 47, 54.

[5] *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260.

[6] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 2695.

[7] *Liṅga Purāṇa*, Purvardha Adh. 96.

[8] Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*, vol. i, p. 52.

[9] Bhandarkar, *Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 164.

as an object of worship and not of any emblem of that God" does not hold water now.

The Purāṇas and the Epics have preserved many traditional accounts regarding the origin of the Liṅga cult. These accounts are mainly mythical and fabulous.[1] From these stories, it is gathered that they all were connected with sex, and thus later on this cult was taken up more enthusiastically and given mystical significance by the Tāntrikas. However by this time the Liṅga had attained a conventional form and there was often no likeness with the male genital organ.

The earliest representation of Liṅga with Yoni, found in Bihar, is on a seal from Basarh,[2] which Bloch then believed (before the discoveries of Mohenjodaro and Harappa) to be the oldest representation of phallic emblem that had been found in India. The Karmaḍaṇḍā Inscription[3] further reminds us of the Liṅga worship during the reign of Kumāra Gupta I. There is a reference to a stucco Liṅga figure on the circular wall of the Maniārmaṭha at Rājgir.[4] A Liṅga with a female worshipper on each side and crescent on top is found on a seal discovered in Nālandā,[5] proving the popularity of the worship of Śiva-Liṅga in Magadha in this period. In the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. the practice of raising shrine of Aṣṭa-Śambhu or eight Liṅgas was adopted in Chotanagpur region, probably under influence from Orissa. In Benisagar there was probably a temple of Aṣṭa-Śambhu. Shrines of Aṣṭa-Śambhu or eight-Liṅgas have been found at Khekparta in Lohardaga and at Anjam in Gumla in Ranchi district.[6] In spite of all these instances, it is rather strange that neither Fa-Hien in the 4th century A.D. nor Yuan Chwang in the 7th century A.D. speaks of Liṅga worship. Perhaps it may be that the travellers were so much concerned with the Buddhist faith alone that they forgot to describe the condition of other sects. However, a few references to Śaivism have been made in the records of Yuan Chwang, when Buddhism was interrupted by Śaivism by the acts of Śaśāṅka.

From the archaeological evidence, this phallic symbolic form of Śiva falls into three different classes :—

(i) The plain cylindrical Liṅga with Yoni or Arghapaṭṭa.

(ii) The Ekamukha-Liṅga, in which one human-face is added to the cylinder.

(iii) The Chaturmukha-Liṅga, in which four faces are placed around the cylinder.

Temples were constructed in which the Liṅgas were installed. We have many references that the kings of this State constructed temples in and

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[1] For detailed description of the different stories of the Purāṇas and the Epics, see Karmarkar, *The Religion of India*, vol. i, pp. 83-85.

[2] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 106, pl. xl (2).

[3] *E.I.*, x, p. 72.

[4] M.A.S.I., No. 58, p. 34.

[5] *ibid.*, No. 66, p. 51 (*S.I.* 790, pl. v. j); The Argha or Yoni also appears to be there.

[6] J.B.R.S., xlii, p. 3.

outside Bihar.[1] There are remains of a Śiva temple belonging to the Pāla period[2] on the Vaibhāragiri hill at Rājgir. This shows that even in the Pāla period this sect had wide popularity.[3]

It is evident from the Bhagalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla[4] that Pāśupata sect of Śaivism was also prevalent in Bihar. The Buddhist Siddha Sarahapā, who flourished in the early Pāla period, obviously refers to the Pāśupata sect of Śaivism who smeared their body with dust and kept long and heavy hair on the head.[5] The Pāśupata doctrines were first preached according to a tradition recorded in the Mahābhārata by Śiva-Śrīkaṇṭha (Śāntiparva, ch. 64-7). Bhandarkar[6] has suggested that this Śrīkaṇṭha was probably a human teacher. His view seems to be confirmed by a passage of the Piṅgalamālā[7] which says that Bhagavān Śrīkaṇṭhanātha was the author of that work. Lakuliśa was probably his disciple and these two were responsible for the foundation of the Pāśupata sect. Lakuliśa had four disciples, Kuśika, Garga, Mitra and Kaurushya, and they lived about ten generations before the time of Chandra Gupta II.[8] R.G. Bhandarkar had placed Lakuliśa in the time of Patañjali who for the first time speaks of the Śiva-Bhāgavatas.[9] But this view can hardly be accepted in the light of the Mathurā Inscription of the time of Chandra Gupta II, which would place Lakuliśa in the 2nd century A.D.[10] In this case either Lakuliśa is not the founder of the Pāśupata sect, if the sect is said to exist in the time of Patañjali who refers to them as Śiva-Bhāgavatas, or it is possible that Lakuliśa was responsible more for the growth of the cult than for its origin, which was earlier and Śrīkaṇṭha may have been responsible for this. This Pāśupata sect was one of the oldest forms of Śaivism prevalent in Northern India, and it continued during the period. Varāhamihira refers to the Pāśupatas, and the Chinese traveller, Yuan Chwang (who visited India in the middle of the 7th century A.D.), has also mentioned the Pāśupatas many times in his records.[11] In Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum have been found ruins of a Hindu temple and images belonging to 9th or 10th century A.D. One of the images, is of Lakuliśa, the propounder of the Pāśupata sect.

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[1] Supra, p. 112.

[2] Ghosh, *A Guide to Rājgir*, p. 11.

[3] Also in the late Pāla period we find that the temples of Vaṭeśa and Prapitāmaheśvara were built by the piety of Viśvāditya in the fifth regnal year of Vigrahapāla III. M.A.S.B., vol. v, p. 81.

[4] I.A., xv, p. 307.

[5] *Dohākosha*, p. 2, vs. 3: "Airiehiṅ uddalia chchhāren, Sīsasu vāhia-ejaḍa-bhāren."

[6] Bhandarkar, *Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 165.

[7] Bagchi, *Studies in the Tantras*, vol. i, p. 106.

[8] *E.I.*, xxi, p. 5.

[9] Bhandarkar, *Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 166; *Cultural Heritage of India*, iv, pp. 214-15.

[10] D.R. Bhandarkar has assigned the date of Lakuliśa in the 1st half of the 2nd century A.D. (*E.I.*, xxi, p. 7). Banerjea has also conceded to his view; Proceedings of the Jaipur Session of the I.H.C., pp. 32 ff.

[11] Watters, ii, pp. 229, 242, 251; i, p. 296, 331, etc.

This shows that Pāśupata cult penetrated as far as the Ādivāsi tract of Chotanagpur probably as one proselytising movement to spread Brāhmaṇic religion in this tract.[1] Another Śaiva sect Muṇḍi who used to shave their hairs also flourished in the period, as Sarahapā refers to Muṇḍi as well.[2]

III. Śakti Worship

Separate images of the consort of Śiva are also numerous. We have already referred to the prevalence of the worship of the mother goddess in the pre-Aryan Indus valley. In the early Vedic period the female deities are generally honoured and referred to as consorts of the male deities. But when Vedic Rudra was absorbed in the pre-Aryan male deity, who was also three-faced, Paśupati and Yogi with Ūrdhvaliṅga, the mother goddess cult was also taken over, and she became the consort of Śiva and was known as Ambikā, Rudrānī, Bhavānī, Durgā, Kātyāyanī and Umā. But because of her pre-Aryan origin, the goddess, in spite of being the partner of Śiva, also continued to be an independent deity. In separate images, she was worshipped in both her destructive and benevolent forms. The worship of Umā as a consort of Śiva became a dominant feature of Paurāṇic Śaivism. This worship of the mother-goddess as the most powerful deity lies at the root of Tāntricism, and consorts of other gods also came to be worshipped. In the period Pārvatī or Umā was worshipped in her mild disposition as the wife of Śiva, and Durgā or Kālī in her fierce disposition as the wife of Rudra or Bhairava. The archæological discoveries of the images of Pārvatī[3] and Durgā[4] (Mahishāsuramardanī) in Bihar belonging to this period, corroborate the above mentioned facts. References to Mātrikās and their association with Skanda is significantly made in the Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription.[5]

Mythologically, Pārvatī, also known as Gaurī or Umā, was the second wife of Śiva after the demise of his first wife Śatī. Therefore, the image of Pārvatī or Gaurī or Umā is generally the same as described in connection with Umā-Maheśvara or Hara-Gaurī. Wherever she is depicted alone, she has her usual symbols, i.e., a mirror and a trident in place of a lotus. In sculptures, as also in literature, three stages of Pārvatī or Gaurī's life have been depicted. The images in which Gaurī is depicted as standing on one leg show her girlhood penances.[6] Her married life is aptly symbolised by the amorous Hara-Gaurī images. The images in which Gaurī is represented as

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[1] J.B.R.S., vol. xlii, p. 1 ff.

[2] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākosha*, p. 2, v. 5.
"Raṅḍi—muṇḍi annavi besen"

[3] A.S.I. (N.I.S.), vol. xlvii, p. 22, pl. iii (a and b); p. 23, pl. vi (b and c).

[4] J.A.S.B., xvi (1947), p. 403; Kramrish, *Pāla and Sena Art*, fig. 1; French, *The Art of Pāla Empire*, p. 5, pl. v; Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I, pl. xiii, No. 33.

[5] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 47.

[6] Bhattacharya, *Indian Images*, I, p. 36.

holding her child Kārttikeya on her lap[1] show the typical motherhood. However, a few Nālandā seals[2] have depicted her with four arms in standing pose. There is a phallus on the right side and the crescent on the left side of her. There is a reference to the worship of the goddess Pārvatī in the form of Katyāyanī or Bhavānī, whose image was installed in the Nāgārjuni cave by the Maukhari king, Anantavarman.[3]

Pārvatī or Durgā is represented in images as having ten or more arms equipped with various weapons. In the form of Mahishāsuramardanī she is invoked by Anantavarman in the 5th-6th century A.D.[4] As Mahishāsuramardanī, she is shown standing on a lion and engaged in slaying the buffalo demon, Mahishāsura. One of her hands is hurling a spear at the chest of the demon. Besides the images already referred to, there is a beautiful representation of her with four hands, depicted on one of the seals found at Nālandā.[5] On another seal from Nālandā is eight-armed Simhavāhinī holding in the right upper fourth hand a sword, in the right upper third hand a lotus, in the right upper second hand a bell, the right first hand stretched in Abhaya Mudrā; the left first is in Varamudrā, the second indistinct, the third has a snake (?), fourth a noose.[6] Another Nālandā seal has Durgā with two hands seated on a lion with one hand in Vara or Abhaya Mudrā and in another she is holding a trident.[7] Another seal has a four-armed standing Mahishāsuramardanī with sword, trident, shield and bell in her hands.[8] Mangalā or Sumangalā[9] is another form of Durgā in which there is the lion vehicle, and the deity has four hands, but she is not slaying any demon. This form of Durgā is frequently depicted on many of the seals discovered at Nālandā.[10] But there she is shown as having eight arms equipped with various weapons. Pārvatī in the form of Kālī or Mahākālī was also known and a seal from Nālandā depicts a four-armed Mahākālī with protruding tongue. She has in her hands skull, dagger, trident and goad.[11] A few images of Durgā belonging to the Pāla period prove the continued popularity of the worship of Durgā or Kālī.[12]

A figure of Mahishāsuramardanī pressing down the head of the demon, buffalo-headed human figure, with her main left hand and thrusting a trident through his body with the main right hand has been found in Benisagar in Singhbhum district in Bihar. "The additional hands hold different weapons of war such as the sword, shield, bow, arrow, thunderbolt, discus

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[1] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 6369.
[2] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 110, *S.I.* 722.
[3] Fleet, op. cit., pp. 226-227.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 54, *S.R.* 18.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 48.
[7] *ibid.*, *S.I.* 800, pl. vi (d).
[8] *ibid.*, p. 54, No. S.I.R. 18.
[9] Bhattacharya, *Indian Images*, p. 37; Patna Museum, Arch. No. 676.
[10] M.A.S.I. No. 66, pp. 48, 53.
[11] *ibid.*, S.I.R. 1(a), pl. v(d), p. 48.
[12] Banerjea; *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd ed.), pp. 501-05.

and the snake. The mount lion also joins in the fight.[1]

The Tāntric form of worship was very much developed in this period and the worshippers of Śakti called Śāktas, worshipped the Goddess in many forms as Śiva was worshipped in many forms by Śaivas. The independent worship of Śakti led to the development of its independent religious literature known as Tantra. She began to be worshipped as having numerous hands and terrible forms and as the highest of all deities. Wine, animal sacrifices and many hideous and revolting rites came to be performed by the Śāktas who began to worship Maṇḍala Chakra and other types of sex symbolism. Some went to the extreme and indulged in sexual orgies. They came to be known as Vāma Mārgis but fundamentally Śakti cult has the high ideals of merger of the individual soul with Brahmā whom they regard as none other than Śakti. Tāntricism as the dominant feature of Śakti worship was very popular in Bengal and Assam. Its predominance in Bihar during the period cannot be doubted in view of the numerous images of the Śakti or Durgā found there.

Another form of the mother goddess cult which became popular was the worship of the mother goddess with a child. On a seal discovered at Nālandā we have a seated goddess with a child and having a tree to her right.[2] On one of the seals, the goddess is seated on a lotus with a child on her left knee and a serpent by the side. The Sun is to the right, a tree to the left of her.[3] The same seal has also a representation of a goddess with a child on the lap and a serpent on each side. Many inscribed images of the Pāla period have been found in Bihar which have a lady with a child. Three such images have been found at the village of Valgudar between Luckheesarai and Monhath in Monghyr District.[4] Such an image is also found at the village Rajauna near Valgudar though the deity is called Pundeśvarī according to the inscription.[5] Sircar[6] appears to be right in suggesting that this type of deity was popular with the rural people and was apparently not unconnected with the conception of Pārvatī with Skanda on her lap and also that of the Buddhist Hāritī. It is possible that we have here the memory of the Magadhan goddess Jarā (who joined the two pieces of Jarāsandha and brought him to life) as well. Hāritī is also associated with Rājagriha.[7]

IV. Minor Religious Sects

During the period under review, there are instances of some minor religious sects flourishing in Bihar side by side with the main religious sects, viz., Buddhist, Jain, Vaishṇava, Śaiva and Śakta. The few inscriptions and

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[1] J.B.R.S., lxii, p. 5.
[2] M.A.S.I., No. 66, p. 42; S.I. 836 and 807, pl. iii (i).
[3] *ibid.*, S.I. 673, pl. vi (i).
[4] *E.I.*, xxviii, p. 137.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *ibid.*
[7] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd ed.), pp. 380-381.

a large number of sculptures and terra-cottas of different deities discovered in this State establish that Gaṇeśa worship, worship of Skanda, Sun worship, Nāga worship and many other popular cults, such as the worship of Saraśvatī, Saptamātrikā, Agni, Gaṅgā and Yamunā, Naigameśa etc. were also prevalent there. Due to the paucity of inscriptions and other evidences, it is not possible to have a detailed knowledge of these cults. Some of them are still popular in Bihar.

Gaṇeśa-worship

Gaṇapati (later Gaṇeśa) was regarded as a gaṇa of Rudra.[1] In the Mahābhārata Śiva is once called Gaṇapati or Gaṇeśvara.[2] In the Mānava Grihya Sūtra, four Vināyakas as harmful agents are referred to.[3] In the Baudhāyana Grihya Sūtra there is a reference to the worship of a Vināyaka.[4] Here also he is shown as harmful and as trouble-maker, but he is also credited with destroying the Vighnas.[5] This is the precursor of later Gaṇeśa. In the Sūtras Vināyaka is often addressed by the same terms as Rudra, such as Bhūtānāmapati, Ugra, Bhīma etc. Vināyaka is associated with a lady named Jyeshṭhā who also bears characteristics of Durgā.[6] Thus the road was clear for the association of Rudra-Śiva with Gaṇeśa. In the Purāṇas Gaṇeśa emerges as an independent deity. In the Matsya Purāṇa, Gaṇeśa is called Vināyakapati, while the Varāha and the Agni Purāṇas take Gaṇeśa primarily to be a trouble-maker, and so gods created him to strew obstacles in the way of the Dānavas.[7] He is given many attributes of Śiva.[8] In the Purāṇas many stories of the birth of Gaṇeśa as son of Śiva are given.[9] But Gaṇeśa had by then become an independent deity who had now changed from a trouble-maker to a remover of troubles (Vighna). Special day for his worship was the fourth day of the bright half of Māgha and the Agni Purāṇa describes the general manner of the ceremony of his worship.[10] Thus the worship of Gaṇeśa had by this time developed into a separate cult though he has intimate mythological associations with Śiva and is represented as Śiva's son. We find a special class of worshippers of Gaṇeśa in India known by the name of the Gaṇapatyas.[11] The discovery of many Gaṇeśa images[12] in Bihar, belonging to the period under review, shows that the worship of Gaṇeśa had become very popular among the Hindus. It was so because he had come to

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[1] *Yv.* (Vājasneyi), 16, 1-66.
[2] Yaduvansi, *Śaivamat*, p. 83.
[3] *Mānava Grihya-Sūtra*, 2, 14.
[4] *Baudhāyana Grihya-Sūtra*, 3, 3, 10.
[5] Yaduvansi, *Śaivamat*, p. 50.
[6] *ibid.*, p. 51.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 122.
[8] *ibid.*
[9] *ibid.*, pp. 124 ff.
[10] *Agni Purāṇa*, 138, 8, ch. 179 and 313.
[11] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 447.
[12] J.A.S.B., xvi (1847), p. 404; Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 8448.19, 669; J.B.R.S., xxxi, p. 156.

be regarded as the bestower of success (Siddhi) and remover of all obstacles. In the images, he is represented as possessing an elephant-head, a pot-belly and a dwarfish form, usually having four or more hands holding lotus, battle-axe, Modaka, etc. Sometimes he is shown in a dancing pose.[1] A stucco figure of Gaṇeśa has been noticed on the cylindrical wall of the Maniāra temple at Rājgir,[2] belonging to the Gupta period. He is depicted on one of the Nālandā seals also,[3] belonging to the Pāla period. Two Gaṇeśa images,[4] both four-armed and seated, holding in the hands a radish, a Japamāla, Kuṭhāra and a cup of sweets have been found in Benisagar in Singhbhum district.

Kārttikeya-worship

Kārttikeya or Skanda is another son of Śiva[5] and Pārvatī who became an object of worship. Patañjali refers to images of Skanda with those of Śiva.[6] Aśvaghosha refers to Skanda as six-headed (Shaṇmukha) and as son of Śiva.[7] Banerjea has cited many evidences of Kārttikeya or his symbol peacock or Śakti represented on coins of Yaudheyas, Ayodhyā, on seal from Bhita and on coins of Kushāṇa kings.[8] The association of Divine mothers with Skanda in the Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription[9] of Skanda Gupta proves the continuity of the earlier mythological tradition of the intimate connection of the mother goddess with Skanda or Kārttikeya and also proves the prevalence of the worship of Kārttikeya in this part of Bihar. This is further corroborated by a rare image of his preserved in the Patna Museum.[10] He is shown sitting on a peacock holding a banner in his left hand and the right hand is in Abhaya Mudrā. There are some evidences to support the contention that Kumāra Gupta I, although a Vaishṇava, was a worshipper of Kārttikeya. Many of his coins contain an image of a peacock, which is the Vāhana of Kārttikeya. His name Kumāra as well as his son's name Skanda mean Kārttikeya. Tripathi[11] is definitely of the view that Kārttikeya was Kumāra Gupta's personal object of worship. Common people also worshipped

[1] There is one such image from Saran district and is at present in the collection of the Patna Musuem.

[2] M.A.S.I., No. 58, p. 34.

[3] *ibid.*, No. 66, p. 41 (*S.I.* 789), pl. iii, g.

[4] J.B.R.S., xliii, p. 4.

[5] Yaduvansi has shown from the analysis of the stories of the birth of Skanda or Kārttikeya in the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa that Kārttikeya was at first thought to be a solar deity or associated with Agni, but later Rudra-(who was also identified with Indra) Skanda was regarded as son of Rudra-Śiva and the Mahābhārata at another place represents the story of Kārttikeya's birth and takes him to be the son of Śiva: *Saivamat*, pp. 76-77. By the time of the Purāṇas Skanda was known only as the son of Śiva (*ibid.*, pp. 126-127).

[6] *Mahābhāshya*, 3. 99.

[7] *Buddhacharita*, i, 93.

[8] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd Ed.), pp. 140-46.

[9] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 49; It is interesting to note that the Brahma Purāṇa refers to the bringing up of the son of Śiva by Krittikas (*Brahma Purāṇa*, ch. 128).

[10] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 6003.

[11] I.H.Q., xv, p. 6.

Kārttikeya, as on a seal of Śreshṭhī Vyāghravala is represented a fan-tailed peacock. The seal belongs to the Gupta period.[1] A single representation of a separate image of the Śakti of Kārttikeya[2] has been found in the district of Bhagalpur and is at present preserved in the Patna Museum. At Benisagar (Singhbhum district) also has been found an image of Kārttikeya.[3] The Apshad Inscription[4] of Ādityaseṇa refers to Kārttikeya and takes him to be the son of Śiva.

Sun-worship

There are references to Sun-worship in Vedic literature, and some of the later traits of Sūrya are derived from the Rigvedic hymns, although it is curious that the Sun-worship of the later period differs much from the Vedic Sun-worship. According to Bhandarkar,[5] the later Sun-worship was most probably "a Scythic importation into India." When and by whom the solar cult was introduced in India, is not yet satisfactorily settled. The Purāṇas like Bhavishya, Śaiva and Varāha narrate the story of the introduction of this cult in India from Śakadvīpa (Eastern Iran). Iranian features of the Sun image and the worship of the Sun are quite plain.[6]

The earliest figures of the Sun God found in this State are those found on a terra-cotta from Patna,[7] and in sculpture on a railing pillar at Bodh-Gayā.[8] In the Patna plaque, the God is standing on a four-horsed chariot, ready with his strung bow and arrow. The object held in the right hand of the charioteer to impel the horses is curious. It resembles a goad rather than a whip. There is a disc encompassing the god and his chariot. This arrangement, according to Marshall,[9] goes back to the figure of a wheel, which in India, as elsewhere, was one of the first symbols of the divine power of the Sun that man began to worship.

Sūrya on the Bodh-Gayā railing pillar appears to be the first example of the canonical form of the Sūrya image. The God is represented, surrounded by the sun disc, on a four-horsed chariot with one wheel. The God is under an umbrella and is attended by two female archers, Ushā and Pratyushā.

In these examples of the Sun-images mentioned above, we find that the image of the Sun-God is made in such a manner that his legs are hidden by the body of the car. But in the later images of the Sūrya, belonging to the Kushāṇa, the Gupta and the Pāla periods, the God is shown dressed in a purely foreign costume such as conical head-dress, armour and high-boots

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[1] A.S.R., 1913-14, p. 125.
[2] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 103 (from Colgaon).
[3] J.B.R.S., xlii, p. 5.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 200 ff.
[5] Bhandarkar, *Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems.*
[6] Banerjea, *Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd ed.), pp. 430 ff.
[7] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 8570.
[8] A.S.R., 1871-72, p. 97.
[9] J.R.A.S., 1908, p. 1097.

in his legs.[1] In none of the mythological or iconographical texts, it is mentioned that the legs of the Sun-God should be covered with high boots. From the Bhavishya Purāṇa,[2] we know that Viśvakarma, the divine artificer, put the God on the lathe and reduced his splendour by slowly anointing him with nectar. But the God did not allow this to be done any further than above the knees, and since then his legs have always been covered. This traditional convention, not to represent the feet of the God, may have conveniently been utilised to introduce high-boots with the Sun-images by the Kushāṇa rulers who had special honour for the Sun.[3] Thus in the words of Coomaraswamy,[4] "the Kushāṇa kings....may have set up and popularised a form of Sūrya images dressed in their own fashion." This foreign influence in the images remained in vogue in most northern Sun-images either in natural or conventional form.

From the above references of the Sun-images, it is evident that the worship of the Sun-God was in vogue in this State from the very beginning as is clear from the Patna plaque of the Sun-image (3rd century B.C.)[5] and the Sun-image on Bodh-Gayā railing which belongs to a period before the advent of the Śakas and the Kushāṇas in India. However, the advent of the Śakas and the Kushāṇas who were also worshippers of the Sun-God might have influenced the indigenous worship of the Sun-God by the introduction of the new forms of images which became very common in later period. This form of image is beautifully described in the Brihatsaṁhitā.[6]

In the beginning of the period under review, we get epigraphic references to the prevalence of the Sun-worship in Bihar. One of the seals discovered from Basarh[7] (ancient Vaiśālī) contains, according to Spooner, a very perfect example of fire altar with probably solar disc. The legend is 'Bhāgavata Ādityasya,' i.e., the seal of the God Sun. Spooner finding the association of Persian fire altar with the worship of the Sun believes in the pronouncedly Persian cult of the Sun in Eastern India in the Gupta Period. It is not possible to be definite whether these Sassanian influences are to be derived through the Kushāṇa dynasty of Kabul in the 4th and 5th century A.D. or to a much earlier period. Besides this, we have another reference to solar worship during the reign of Skanda Gupta.[8] But this record is found at Indore.

It is during the reign of Ādityaseṇa and Jīvita Gupta II that we get references to a regular cult of solar worship in the State of Bihar. The Shahpur Sun-image Inscription[9] proves its existence in this State. The inscription on the image records that it was originally set up in the great Agarahāra of

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[1] See Plate 3.
[2] *Bhavishya Purāṇa*, cxxiii, 55-60 and 77-81.
[3] Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, p. 66.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] Pandey, *Sūrya*, p. 45.
[6] *Brihatsaṁhitā*, ch. 57, 46-8.
[7] A.S.R., 1913-14, Seal No. 607, p. 149.
[8] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 70.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 210.

Nālandā by Sālapakṣha, a virtuous commander of the army in the reign of Ādityaseṇa in the 7th century A.D.[1] The Deo-Barnārk Inscription[2] of Jīvita Gupta II reveals how Bhojaka Sūryamitra was permitted to continue the offering of a village Vārunikā to the Sun-God under the title of Varuṇasvāmin. It also mentions Bālāditya and the Maukhari Kings, Avantivarman and Śarvavarman as previous donors. It is, therefore, evident that the Sun-worship was certainly prevalent in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., and it had received State patronage.

A large number of images of Sūrya have been discovered in Bihar at different places like Patna,[3] Nālandā,[4] Bodh-Gayā,[5] Barābar,[6] Kurkihar,[7] Monghyr,[8] Arrah,[9] etc. Besides these there are a few more images which may be taken to be of Sūrya; one from Bodh-Gayā and another from Jayamangalagarh (Monghyr). These images seem to have been wrongly identified with Bodhisattva[10] and Badrinātha[11] by Mitra and Chaudhary respectively. But the description of the image by Mitra clearly indicates that it is not of Bodhisattva but is of Sūrya. Similarly, the photograph of the image in the G.D. College Bulletin (alleged to be of Badrinātha) indicates that this image is also of Sūrya as is evident from certain characteristics of the image such as double lotus, chariot driven by seven horses with Aruṇa, accompanied by Daṇḍa and Piṅgala and covered legs.

These images found at various places clearly prove that the Sun-worship was widely prevalent in the State of Bihar during the later Gupta and the Pāla periods. The Agni Purāṇa[12] refers to the Sun-worship associated with the 'Shashṭhi-Vrata,' which is perhaps similar to 'Chaṭṭha' worship of the modern period, widely prevalent specially in the State of Bihar. Describing the Sun-worship, the Agni Purāṇa[13] also refers to Revanta, son of the Sun God. Separate images of Revanta have been discovered at Nālandā.[14] In these images, he is represented as riding a horse and Indra holding his parasol.

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[1] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 83.

[2] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 218.

[3] J.B.R.S., xl, p. 343.

[4] Ghosh, *A Guide to Nālandā*, p. 20.

[5] A.S.R., 1871-72, p. 97.

[6] J.A.S.B., xvi, (1847), p. 404.

[7] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 9763.

[8] *ibid.*, Arch. Nos. 12 and 35.

[9] *ibid.*, Arch. No. 6015.

[10] Mitra, *Buddha-Gayā*, p. 136, pl. xxiii (3).

[11] G.D. College Bulletin Series No. 2, p. 18; Chaudhary has not given any description of the image but simply mentioned it as Badrinātha about which there is not any reference in Early Indian Iconography so far known.

[12] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 181, p. 685.

[13] *ibid.*

[14] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 20, 820; Ghosh, *A Guide to Nālandā*, p. 33, Patna Museum, Arch. No. 1722.

Nāga-worship

Nāga-worship is one of the earliest popular cults and there are references to it in the Atharvaveda, Grihya-Sūtras and also in the Mahābhārata.[1] It is found that almost all the important religions of India have in one form or the other accepted Nāga-worship. Śiva is everywhere associated with Nāga. Buddhism and Jainism had to admit the Nāga (though in a subordinate capacity) in their own religious systems. The Buddha receives the homage of Muchalinda and Elapattra. Pārśvanātha has the serpent as his special symbol. Vaishṇavism, too, incorporated the Nāga into its cult in a different fashion. The use of Śesha or Ananta as the couch or seat of Vishṇu is very significant. Thus snake is in some way or other associated with each and every important sect of India. Nāgas and Nāginīs are rightly placed in the category of folk gods and goddesses.[2]

References to Nāga cult in Bihar are not many. Nāga-worship has been referred to in the Pāli and Sanskrit literatures. These references do not give sufficient material to trace its development in Bihar. It is only through indirect evidences, that the state of Nāga-worship can be determined to some extent. The few Nāga images that have been found in Bihar are of some help in determining the state of Nāga-worship current here during the period under review.

It has already been mentioned that Vaishṇavism has incorporated the Nāga into its cult as a couch of Vishṇu. But it seems interesting that the Gupta rulers being Vaishṇava had adopted Garuḍa, the enemy of snakes, as their family emblem.

The first references to Nāga during the period under review are made by Yuan Chwang,[3] in the middle of the 7th century A.D. He has related the story of the Nālandā monastery which took its name from a Nāga called Nālandā which lived in a pool close by. I-Tsing[4] also refers to this tradition but says that the Nāga was called Nanda. It shows the prevalence of the traditional Nāga cult in this region.

The Archæological excavation at Rājgir,[5] revealed that there existed a Nāga temple at Rājgir, at present known as Maṇināga temple or Maniāramaṭha. From the Study of its finds, the date of this temple can be assigned to the later Gupta period. In this site of excavation, besides the stucco figurines of Nāgas and Nāginīs on the cylindrical wall of the temple, a large number of Nāga images, along with a bas-relief containing an inscription mentioning Maṇināga,[6] (about whom there is a description also in the Mahābhārata)[7]

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[1] Banerjea, *The Development of the Hindu Iconography*, pp. 345-46.

[2] *ibid.*, p. 344.

[3] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 167.

[4] J.R.A.S. (N.S.), xiii, p. 571.

[5] A.S.R., 1905-06, p. 104.

[6] *ibid.*

[7] *Mbh.*, Sabhā Parva, p. xxi, 9-10; Quoted from Vogel, *Indian Serpent Lore*, p. 218.

have been found. In addition to these we have got some more images (both in stone and bronze) of Nāgas found at Nālandā.[1] Some seals discovered in Nālandā also show the Nāga deity in human form. On one of the seals is a seated male figure round whose head there is a canopy of seven hoods and a tree on each side. He holds a vessel in the left and some indistinct object in the right hand.[2] All these go to prove that Nāga-worship was prevalent in Bihar during the period under review. A combined image of two Nāgas along with their Nāginīs on either side, preserved in the Patna Museum[3] indicates that Nāga-worship along with their Śaktis had also become very popular.

Sarasvatī-worship

Sarasvatī is the Goddess of learning. In images she is invariably represented as holding a 'Vīṇā.' She is usually represented with the image of Vishṇu. In fact very few images have been found in which she is depicted alone. From the early period up to the present day, Sarasvatī has been regarded as a Hindu deity, although we do find the Buddhists including her amongst their own deities in the Tāntric period.[4] This fact gets further support from the discoveries of the images (bronze) of Sarasvatī at Nālandā, the most important centre of the Buddhist learning.[5]

Saptamātrikā-worship

It is the worship of the Seven-Mothers. In what period their worship was introduced into the Hindu religion is not definitely known, although Mackay has traced its prevalence to the Harappa culture.[6] The discoveries of their images (combined) both in terra-cotta[7] and in stone[8] establish the fact that their worship was quite prevalent in the period under review. Inscriptional evidence[9] provides further proof of their worship. From references about their Sādhanas in Buddhist literature,[10] we learn that the Buddhists of the Tāntric period had also incorporated the Saptamātrikā into their religion. This fact is further corroborated by the discovery of a composite image of the Seven-Mothers[11] at Nālandā.

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[1] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 43-3843; Kempers, *Bronzes of Nālandā and Hindu Javanese Art*, p. 37,fig. 19.

[2] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 45.

[3] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 7496; This early Nāga-worship was so much deep-rooted among the people that even in the present day we find a large section of the people of Bihar worshipping Nāga on the occasion of Nāga-Panchamī, a sacred day for its performance. Manasādevī, Nāga goddess, is worshipped with due enthusiasm in Bihar especially in Bhagalpur District, during the rains.

[4] Bhattacharyya, *Buddhist Iconography*, p. 150.

[5] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 20, 850.

[6] Mackay, *Early Indus Civilizations*, p. 58, pl. xvii (8).

[7] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 2869.

[8] M.A.S.I. No. 66, pp. 114-15.

[9] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 47.

[10] *Sādhanamālā*, (G.O.S. xli) ii, p. 407.

[11] M.A.S.I. No. 66, pp. 114-15.

Agni-worship

In the Vedic period Agni was one of the most important deities. But in course of time Śiva, Vishṇu and Sūrya appropriated his attributes, and there being comparatively speaking less scope for developing legends and anthropomorphic traits of the Agni, the deity was losing fast its importance to such an extent that it was reduced to one of the Dik-pālas. But actually the God was not absolutely forgotten in the period under review. A few images of the Agni[1] belonging to the Gupta and the Pāla periods indicate that the Agni-worship was also in vogue in Hinduism. Agni is pot-bellied, has rosary in his right hand; his left hand is touching the left knee, and he is wearing Yajñopavīta, necklace, ear-rings and mukuṭa. Flames of fire are rising by his sides and above his head. A standing figure of Agni with a rosary in his right hand and a nectar flask in the left and with flames rising on both sides and a ram on the pedestal has been found in Benisagar in Singhbhum district.[2] The Paurāṇic literature also indicates his worship during the period. For example, the Agni Purāṇa[3] refers to Agni-hoṭra-yajña, in which worship to God Agni through oblation consisting of milk, oil and sour gruel, was offered every morning and evening by the performer.

Gaṅgā-Yamunā-worship

Gaṅgā is certainly the most sacred river of Northern India. It flows through Bihar and makes the land very fertile. Thus the people of Northern India regard her as the most sacred river, and have been worshipping her from an early period in the form of a young mother. Even now, there is an auspicious day in the year known as Gaṅgā Mahātmya when the orthodox people take bath in the Gaṅgā.[4] In images she is represented as holding an urn and a lotus and riding on a crocodile. The vehicle, the crocodile, is the most characteristic of her image. Discoveries of her many images[5] prove that she too was a popular deity of worship by the people of the State. An image of Yamunā standing on a tortoise with a female attendant holding a parasol over her head and two female devotees on either side has been found in Benisagar in Singhbhum.[6]

Naigameśa-worship

Naigameśa was the name of a much dreaded follower of Kārttikeya, a

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[1] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 6011; Banerjea, *The Development of the Hindu Iconography* (2nd ed.), p. 524, pl. xlv, fig. 4; see Plate 4.

[2] J.B.R.S., vol. xlii, p. 6. Two more figures of Agni have been found in Bihar. One is in the collection of Sri H. Upal, Director, Bhartiya Nritya Kalā Mandir, Patna. Another is in village Kumati in Saran district. Both belong to the Pāla period.

[3] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 32, p. 127.

[4] *ibid.*, ch. 110.

[5] Nālandā Museum, Arch. Nos. 22, 118, 20, 789; Ghosh, *A Guide to Nālandā*, p. 31.

[6] J.B.R.S., xlii, p. 7.

person possessed by him showed symptoms of foaming, vomiting and talking like a mad man.[1] According to tradition, Naigameśa had the head of a goat but the torso of a human being. Sanskrit authorities refer to Naigameśa as a male person. Terra-cottas, however, show that the deity was also depicted as a female. Perhaps his worship in the form of a female was due to the Tāntric influence of Śakti-worship. At Kumrahar, a sufficient number of terra-cottas of the image of Naigameśa (both male and female) have been unearthed. Their dates vary from 100 A.D. to 500 A.D. as is determined from the stratification of the layers marked in the excavations.[1] This shows that the deity was widely worshipped to avoid its evil attention. Eventually it became the presiding deity for child-birth.[2]

Besides these the common people might have continued to worship Yakshas, Gandharvas, Navagrahas, Revanta etc. Some of these as subsidiary divine figures adorn the images of main deities.

An image of standing Vāyu holding a flag-staff in the left hand with a mount stag on the pedestal was found in Benisagar in Singhbhum district. Another image of Kubera with four pots (in other mediaeval images he has eight pots representing ashṭhasiddhis) has been discovered in the same place.[3]

Aghora-cult

A unique seal[4] from Nālandā indicates the prevalence of Aghora-cult. This cult was a development of the Hindu Tāntricism associated with Śaivism[5] which later on deteriorated much due to its hideous practices and became a part of both the Buddhist and the Hindu Tāntric cults.

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS RITES, FESTIVALS AND CEREMONIES

It has been rightly observed that a Hindu's life from the time he came into the womb of his mother to his death or even thereafter was full of Socio-religious rites and ceremonies, the performance of some of which was obligatory and others desirable. From the Dharmaśāstra and the Paurāṇic literatures and Kālidāsa's works we learn that the Dvijas or the twice-born people purified their lives by performing the various Saṁskāras[6] such as :—

(i) Garbhadhāna (the ceremony of impregnation)
(ii) Punsavana (the ceremony of ensuring the birth of a male child)
(iii) Sīmant-onnāyana (the ceremony of parting of the hair)
(iv) Jātakaraṇa (the ceremony performed at the birth of a child)
(v) Nāmakaraṇa (the ceremony of naming the child)

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[1] Report on the Kumrahar excavations, p. 109.
[2] *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 135.
[3] J.B.R.S., xlii, p. 6, (fig. 3).
[4] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 50 (*S.I.R.* 15).
[5] Banerjea, *The Development of the Hindu Iconography*, pp. 228, 465.
[6] Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. ii, part i, p. 188; *Agni Purāṇa*, chap. 32, p. 127; *Raghuvaṁśa*, iii. 18; x. 78, pp. 26, 112.

(vi) Annaprāsana (the ceremony of giving a new-born child solid food to eat for the first time)
(vii) Chūḍākaraṇa (the ceremony of tonsure)
(viii) Upanayana (the ceremony of investing the boy with the sacred thread)
(ix) Godāna (another ceremony for shaving head just before the performance of marriage)
(x) Vivāha (the marriage ceremony)
and (xi) Dasāha (the last ceremony performed on a Dvija after he is dead).

The performance of the Homas and the payment of fees to priests were common features in these ceremonies.[1]

Besides the Saṁskāras mentioned above there were other ceremonies such as Vratas, Yajñas, and many other festivals, some full of mirth and merriment. The Agni Purāṇa mentions a number of Vratas which fall on almost all the Tithis (i.e., on every phase of the moon's waning or waxing), such as Ekam, Dvitīya, Tritīya, Chaturthī, Pañchamī, Shashṭhī, Saptamī, Ashṭamī, Navamī, Daśamī, Ekādaśī, Dvādaśī, Trayodaśī, Chaturdaśī, Purṇimā, Amāvasī etc.

So far as our references go, we may presume the Tithis on which most of the religious grants were made must have been considered auspicious or of special religious significance, and we know from practice prevalent before and even now, that grants are made on auspicious and pious days.

Dvitīya of the month of Śrāvaṇa appears to have been considered auspicious, because one Avimuktagyña of the Kuṭṭukka country made a permanent donation to a temple of Subhadreśvara (Lord Śiva), in the 17th year of the reign of Vishṇu Gupta, for the maintenance of the burning of lamps, established in the hermitage of Chuṇḍaskita[2] (situated in the modern village of Mangraon in the district of Shahabad). The Agni Purāṇa refers to the Dvitīya of Kārttika as auspicious. On this day the God of Death (Yama) was worshipped.[3] It is still prevalent in most parts of Bihar and is known as "Yama-Dvitīya. At some places it is also called 'Bhaiyā-Dūja' because on this day sisters feed their brothers, who in return give their sisters ornaments and clothes.

'Ashūnya-Shayanam' was another Vrata performed on this very Tithi in the black half of the month of Śrāvaṇa. It was generally performed by the male for never getting separated from his wife. On this day God Vishṇu and his consort Lakshmī in the ocean of milk were worshipped. Gifts of bed, food, light, etc. were offered to the Brāhmaṇas to conduce to happiness in married life and the attainment of Vishṇu-loka after death.[4]

Tritīya of the month of Chaitra was also an important Vrata as on this Tithi, Gaurī-vrata[5] was performed. On this day God Hara married Gaurī. In

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[1] On the basis of the manuscript of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva's *Karmanushṭhāna-paddhati* Majumdar has given a short description of these Saṁskāras performed in Bengal in the 12th century A.D. They could not be very different in Bihar, though specific evidences are lacking: *History of Bengal*, i, pp. 594-606.

[2] *E.I.*, xxvi, p. 246.

[3] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 177, p. 677.

[4] *ibid.*

[5] *ibid.*, ch. 178, p. 679.

the months of Bhādra, Vaiśākha, and Mārgashīrsha, the Saubhāgya-shayanam Vrata was performed on this Tithi. Offerings were made to Brāhmaṇas and Brāhmaṇa couples were fed.[1] A man attained good luck, health, beauty and longevity by performing this Vrata. This is performed as 'Teeja' today by married women in Bihar almost as a rule in the month of Bhādra. Akshayatritīya was also performed on this Tithi in the month of Vaiśākha-Śuklapaksha. A prayer to Janārdana on this day accompanied by fasting was considered equal to performing the Rājasūya.[2]

One who performed the Chaturthī Vrata in the months of Māgha and Bhādra and worshipped Śiva with flowers and Modaka would become the possessor of Śiva-loka after death.[3] In the month of Phālguna this Vrata was called Amghna (unobstructed). On this occasion in the month of Bhādra in the 33rd year of the reign of Chandra Gupta II, a gift was made to the monks of Sanchi by a certain donor. From the interest of this gift five monks were to be fed every day, and a lamp was to be burnt in the Ratnagriha daily.[4] It is just possible that the Buddhists also might have regarded this date as auspicious.

We have references that the Pañchamī of Bhādra was considered an auspicious day. One Keśava (the son of a sculptor named Ujjala) made a consecration of a four-faced Mahādeva and excavated a tank at Mahābodhi in the 26th year of the reign of Dharmapāla.[5] The Agni Purāṇa[6] mentions that on the Pañchamī of Śrāvaṇa, Bhādra, Aśvin and Kārttika, snake worship was performed. This Vrata is still current in Bihar being locally known as 'Nāga-Pañchamī' and observed in the month of Śrāvana.

One who performed the Shashṭhi Vrata in the month of Kārttika and made offerings to the Sun,[7] received a great boon from him. This Vrata is now very popular in Bihar known as 'Chhaṭṭa,' and besides being the Sun-worship, it is also observed as a worship of mother Goddess Shashṭhī, the consort of Kārttikeya, whose one image, found in Bihar, is preserved in the Patna Museum.[8] In the month of Bhādra, Skanda-Shashṭhī was performed.[9]

In the months of Māgha and Bhādra, Kamalā-Saptamī and Phala-Saptamī Vratas[10] were performed and the Sun was worshipped with white lotus. On this day in the month of Māgha, in the reign of Ādityaseṇa, virtuous Śālapaksha, the Balādhikrita installed an image of the Sun in the great Agrahāra of Nālandā for the purpose of increasing the religious merit of his parents as well as of himself.[11]

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[1] *Agni Purāṇa,* ch. 178, pp. 682-83.
[2] *Matsya Purāṇa,* ch. 65, 1-7.
[3] *Agni Purāṇa,* ch. 179, p. 684.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 33.
[5] J.A.S.B. (N.S.), iv, p. 101.
[6] *Agni Purāṇa,* ch. 180, p. 685.
[7] *ibid.,* ch. 181, p. 685.
[8] Patna Museum, Arch. No. 103.
[9] *Agni Purāṇa,* ch. 181, p. 685.
[10] *ibid.,* ch. 182, p. 686.
[11] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 210.

The Ashṭamī of Vaiśākha was probably considered auspicious as on this day a Brāhmaṇa pilgrim named Narasimha Chaturvedi from Kāñchi dedicated a Buddhist image at Kurkihar in the 28th year of the reign of king Rājyapāla. The inscription refers to his pious wish of increasing the merit of his teachers, parents and all the living creatures.[1] Again on this Tithi in the same month, the Nandapur Copperplate Grant[2] (in Monghyr dist.) was executed by a person to a Brāhmaṇa, inhabitant of the Agrahāra of Khaṭapurāṇa in Nanda-Vithi for the performance of five great sacrifices for the increase of the donor's religious merit. This proves that these sacrifices were performed by the Brāhmaṇas on behalf of the donors on the payment of gifts. On the Ashṭamī[3] of the month of Bhādra, Lord Krishṇa was born. The performer of this Vrata was supposed to attain salvation and become the father of many good sons and ultimately go to the Vishṇuloka. This is locally known as 'Krishṇa-Janmāshṭamī.'

Navamī[4] Vrata in the month of Āśvina was known as Gaurī-Navamī. And those who performed this Vrata with suitable animal sacrifices to the Goddess Durgā were supposed to get their desires fulfilled. This worship is better known as Durgā-Pūjā and is still extremely popular in Bihar and Bengal. It is a national festival. The Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa[5] and the Skanda Purāṇa[6] indicate that the worship of the Goddess was mainly political in character. The royal insignia and the arms and weapons were worshipped along with the Goddess in a decorated pavilion. The Devī Purāṇa[7] states that on the eighth day of the full moon in Āśvina nine wooden pavilions were erected and the image of Durgā made of gold, silver or wood was installed in one of them. The king repeated in silence Mantras before the Goddess and sacrificed an animal after midnight for obtaining victory. Thereafter he took a ceremonial bath and hit a model, made of paste, of his enemy with a sword and presented it to Skanda, the general of the Gods. But this Tithi in the month of Vaiśākha also may have had some special significance, because on this day Nārāyaṇapāla (in the 17th year of his reign) granted a village called Mukuṭikā in Kaksha-Vishaya in the district of Tirābhukti for the maintenance of the temple of Śiva at Kalaspota, which was founded by the king himself.[8]

On the Daśamī of the month of Vaiśākha, we find Samudra Gupta making grant to a Brāhmaṇa[9] (Gayā Copperplate Inscription) for the sake of the increase of the religious merit of the donor. It may suggest that this day was in some ways auspicious, but a more important and popular festival

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[1] J.B.O.R.S., xxvi, pt. iii, pp. 246-47. It is possible that Buddhists also considered this Tithi auspicious.

[2] *E.I.*, xxiii, p. 55.

[3] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 183-84.

[4] *ibid.*, ch. 185, p. 692.

[5] *Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, p. 284 (2).

[6] *Skanda Purāṇa*, Prabhāsa Khanda, Adhyāya 322, p. 181 (1).

[7] *Devī Purāṇa*, Skanda iii, Adhyāya 26, p. 42.

[8] I.A., xv, p. 304.

[9] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 257.

Vijayadaśamī[1] was performed in the month of Āśvina, which was considered as a festival of great rejoicing for the Hindus.

After Daśamī comes the eleventh phase of the moon called Ekādaśī.[2] It was performed both in the dark and the bright fortnight (Krishṇa and Śukla Pakshas) of the month. On this day the worship of God Vishṇu was taken to be very auspicious. In the reign of Chandra Gupta II (in the eighty-second Gupta era), on this day in the month of Ashāḍa, a cave was dedicated at Udayagiri by Sanakānikā.[3] The orthodox people of Bihar still observe this Vrata throughout the year.

On the Dvādaśī of the month of Māgha, king Dharmapāla, at the request of his Mahāsāmantādhipati Narāyaṇavarman, donated four villages with their Haṭṭikā (market) and Talapāṭaka (taxes) to the Lāṭa Brāhmaṇa priests and other attendants for the performance of worship and other rites in the temple built at Subhasthalī.[4] According to the Agni Purāṇa,[5] on this Tithi (in the month of Māgha) Bhīma-Dvādaśī was held and God Nārāyaṇa was worshipped. This indicates that the Dvādaśī of the month of Māgha was held in high respect. Govinda-Dvādaśī took place in the month of Phālguna.[6] The Agni Purāṇa further mentions Govatsa and Tila Dvādaśī.[7] On such occasions worship of Lord Krishṇa and Vishṇu was performed with high reverence. Gifts were also made to Brāhmaṇas.[8]

On the Purṇimā of the month of Māgha, we find that Ādityaseṇa along with his consort Koshadevī constructed a religious establishment with a large sum of money after performing Aśvamedha sacrifices and Tulādāna.[9] It may suggest that this day was in some ways auspicious, but more popular and important festival was Aśoka Purṇimā[10] which was usually undertaken in the month of Chaitra and was practised on the occasion of all subsequent Purṇimās for a year.

The Pitri-Amāvasī Vrata[11] was one of the important Vratas that falls on this Tithi. Libation of water and offering of cakes for obsequies were made to one's departed manes on this occasion. By observing such Vrata for a year a man becomes free from all sins and goes to heaven. In the month of Jaishṭha, on this Tithi of Amāvasī, Sāvitrī-Vrata occurs.[12] It was performed by only women folk who used to fast for three consecutive days and worship Sāvitrī, the model of chastity. In this way we find that the people used to observe or perform the Pratipada Vratas.

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[1] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 186, p. 694.
[2] *ibid.*, ch. 187, p. 695.
[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 25.
[4] *E.I.*, iv, p. 243.
[5] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 188, p. 696.
[6] *ibid.*, ch. 188, p. 696.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 697.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 698.
[9] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 213.
[10] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 194, p. 706.
[11] *ibid.*, ch. 194, p. 706.
[12] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 194, p. 707.

There were some more Vratas, which were observed by the people. They were Nakshatra, Māsa and Ritu Vratas. Among the Nakshatra Vratas, Ananta[1] was performed in the month of Mārgaśirsha. On the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight in the day of Bhādra, it is still observed in Bihar. The Vrati used to worship God Hari on this occasion and was supposed to receive blessings from him.

Saṁkrāntī[2] was another Vrata which occurred on the occasion of the Sun's passing over to a new zodiacal sign. God Śiva and Sūrya were worshipped on this day. We have an inscriptional reference to this Vrata.[3] It is recorded on a plate dated in the fifth year of Mahipāla's reign on the twenty-sixth day of the month of Śrāvaṇa. This inscription speaks of the grant made by the king on the occasion of a ceremonial bath taken by him in the Ganges on the day of the Vishuvata Saṁkrāntī. A ceremonial bath and offerings of gifts on the occasion of the Vishuvata Saṁkrāntī are both enjoined by the Hindu scriptures. This Vrata is still current among the people of Bihar.

Like the Dīpāvali of today, Dīpadāna Vrata was performed in the month of Kārttika Amāvasī.[4] On this day the Vrati used to illuminate the house with lighted lamps.[5]

All these Vratas terminated with a meagre meal called Pāraṇa and the persons performing them slept on the bare floor and worshipped the image of the presiding deity for the day. Japas (repetition of Mantra) and Homa ceremonies were performed and gifts were made to the priests[6] at the close of all Vratas. The Brāhmaṇas were also feasted, their numbers (viz., twenty-four, twelve, five or one) depended on the financial capacity of the Vrati. The whole aim of these Vratas was to get all the enjoyments of life in this world and salvation in the next world after death.

It may be suspected that much emphasis on these various Vratas, which ended with gifts to Brāhmaṇas, was laid in order to improve or assure their economic and social pre-eminence. Buddhism and Jainism preached against Brāhmaṇism. Their doctrine of Ahimsā, their disbelief in the efficacy of funeral rites, sacrifices etc., their disregard for the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas and their acknowledgment of equal status for all their followers might have adversely affected the economic condition and the social position of the Brāhmaṇas.

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[1] *Agni Purāṇa.*, ch. 196, p. 711.

[2] *ibid.*, ch. 199, p. 717.

[3] *E.I.*, xxix, p. 2; In the present case it is possible to think that the grant had been made on the first of Vaiśākha although the charter was issued a few months later on the twenty-sixth of Śrāvaṇa.

[4] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 200, p. 718.

[5] Alberūnī, who was in India between 1017-1030 A.D. also noticed the famous Dīpāvali. On this occasion, according to him, "people bathe, dress, enjoy festivity, make presents to each other of betel-leaves and areca-nuts; they ride to the temples to give alms and play merrily with each other till noon. In the night they light a great number of lamps in every place so that the air is perfectly clear."

[6] *Raghuvaṁśa*, II, 39, 55, p. 17 and 20.

The spread of the doctrine of Ahimsā was the major cause for the unpopularity of Vedic sacrifices which were the main sources of income to the priest. Aśoka's categorical prohibition of bloody sacrifices in his empire is a case in point. This state of affairs is highlighted, of course indirectly, from the works of Smritikāras like Manu,[1] Gautama[2] and Vishṇu,[3] who have chalked out, besides the priestly functions, some other means for the Brāhmaṇas at times of distress. For example, if a Brāhmaṇa could not be redressed through the purer means such as performing Yajña, Adhyāpana and Pratigraha, he could follow the profession of the Kshatriyas. Even if that profession failed to give him the bare maintenance, he could take up the profession of a Vaiśya, but in no case the profession of the Śūdra was to be followed.

From the early period of their history, the Brāhmaṇas stuck to the purer duties as mentioned above for their livelihood. They avoided service, trade, agriculture, etc., until and unless they were in great distress, and the period of the rise of heretical sects like Buddhism might have been such a period. But with the rise of the Śuṅgas in North-Eastern India including Bihar, the orthodox Brāhmaṇism and Vedic sacrifices were enthusiastically revived. In the Gupta period classical Hinduism incorporating early Vedic sacrifices and ceremonies, besides including a lot of other popular, social and religious ceremonies reached its acme. It is already stated elsewhere that the major Purāṇas were re-edited and finally amended in the Gupta period. New Vratas and sacrifices were introduced therein and provisions of gifts to Brāhmaṇas were made.

Regarding the doctrine of gifts, there was a belief that what is given in this life becomes a means of happiness in the next. In the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka as quoted from Bhaṭṭa Lakshmīdhara,[4] it is declared "Dāna is the armour of the sacrifices. In the world of guerdon (Dakshiṇa-loka) all beings subsist on the giver. By Dāna (gifts) evil spirits are driven away. By Dāna those who hate become friends. Everything rests on Dāna. Therefore, Dāna is said to be the best." The idea is that the gods are pleased when gifts are made to the Brāhmaṇas, and the giver receives boons from the god for this pious act.

The Brāhmaṇic literature not only introduced the system of Dāna to Brāhmaṇas, but also the system of Dakshiṇā. "One of the conditions of a valid Dāna is the presentation of a Dakshiṇā to the recipient, over and above the article given away."[5] This was in accordance with the old Vedic rituals. Its omission would invalidate a Dāna. A Yajña without Dakshiṇā and devotion (Śraddhā) is of the worst kind according to the Bhagavadgītā.[6] The numismatic evidence shows that this practice of Dakshiṇā was quite common in the time of the Gupta rulers. For example, the Aśvamedha type of gold

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[1] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxv, p. 420.
[2] *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 212.
[3] *ibid.*, vol. vii, p. 13.
[4] Bhaṭṭa Lakshmīdhara, *Krityakalpataru* (Dānakāṇḍa), G.O.S., xcii, p. 68.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 83.
[6] *Bhagavadgītā*, xvii, 11-13, (*S.B.E.*, vol. viii), p. 119.

coins issued by Samudra Gupta and Kumāra Gupta I, might have been objects of Dakshiṇā to the Brāhmaṇas, on the eve of Aśvamedha sacrifices. This fact is further corroborated by Kālidāsa,[1] who has referred to Dakshiṇā, usually given to the Brāhmaṇas.

The merit of a Dāna was enhanced if it was made at a Tīrtha or holy place or on the banks of a sacred stream or at the confluence of rivers or on the shore of an ocean.[2] People followed these recommendations and generally offered Dāna at such places. For example, the people used to offer Dāna at Gayā Pitri-tīrtha. This practice of offering Dāna was also very popular among the Buddhists as well. For example, the Buddhists (from different parts of India and from abroad) used to come to Buddhist sacred places in Bihar such as Nālandā, Bodh-Gayā and Kurkihar to offer Dāna and make votive offerings to their respective deities and priests. Even the system of feeding the Śramaṇas was quite common amongst the followers of Buddhism and we have many inscriptional evidences of it. For example, the Sanchi Stone Inscription[3] of the reign of Chandra Gupta II, refers to an official of the king named Āmarakadeva who made an endowment of twenty-five dināras, the interest of which was to be used for providing the maintenance of five Bhikshus and the burning of a lamp in the Ratnagriha. Fa-Hien[4] has also acknowledged this practice as being prevalent in Magadha. He writes about the monks of the monasteries at Bodh-Gayā, "the local lay-worshippers supplied them with all that they needed." In a similar manner we find that one Yaśovarmadeva[5] made a large gift to the monastery at Nālandā and fed the Śramaṇas.

The period is also remarkable for the performance of Brāhmaṇical sacrifices. We find Samudra Gupta performing an Aśvamedha sacrifice[6], which was the king of all the Yajñas performed during those days.[7] Setting up of Yūpa (a sacrificial post) which was a Vedic practice, was also performed. A minister of Kumāra Gupta I set up a Yūpa at Biharshariff.[8] The Pañchamahāyajñas (referred to in the Nandapur Copperplate Grant in the Monghyr District) were greatly encouraged by the donations from the king as well as from private persons.[9] These five great sacrifices were as follows :

(i) *Bali*—Offering of ghee, grain, rice etc. to the Gods and all creatures of every description.
(ii) *Chāru*—The oblation of rice, barley etc., for the deceased ancestors.
(iii) *Sattva*—The giving of alms and refuge.
(iv) *Viśvadeva*—The offering to all deities.

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[1] *Mālavikāgnimitra,* v, p. 338.
[2] G.O.S., vol. xvii, p. 111.
[3] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 32.
[4] Legge, p. 89.
[5] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 81.
[6] Supra, p. 134.
[7] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 32, p. 127.
[8] Fleet, op. cit., p. 49.
[9] *E.I.*, xxiii, p. 55; xv, pp. 114-15.

(v) *Agni-hotra*—An oblation to the God Agni consisting of milk, oil and sour gruel, offered every morning and evening.

There are references to many other festivals, among which 'Kaumudī-Mahotsava' is one. It was celebrated in honour of the full-moon (as its literal meaning suggests) in the month of Kārttika.[1] It was a great festival common to all people.[2] From the drama 'Kaumudī-Mahotsava,' it appears that it was an annual festival of autumnal full-moon which used to take place in Magadha.[3] We find it mentioned in 'Mudrārākshasa,' where king Chandra Gupta shows his eagerness to visit Kusumapura (Pāṭaliputra) on the occasion of the commencement of Kaumudī-Mahotsava. On this occasion, as the drama itself implies, in the evening the beauty of Kusumapura was heightened by thousands of men and women in perpetual glee.[4] On the royal road were heard the jingling sound of the girdles of the beauties, and at night ladies went out to meet their lovers.[5] Lakshmīdhara (in Rājadharmakāṇḍa of Krityakalpataru),[6] quoting from the Skanda-Purāṇa, prescribes Kaumudī-Mahotsava as the festival of moonlight. It was celebrated in honour of Śiva on the full-moon day of Kārttika or the Rasapūrṇimā, the day on which the Sonepur fair commences in Bihar now. The king was enjoined to take the lead in organising and observing the festival. Singers sang and the dancers danced at various places in the towns. Every house had to be white-washed or polished and banners had to be prominently displayed. The streets were bestrewn with flowers, and during the night the roads and the houses were illuminated with lamps. The young men and women roamed in the streets with music, dancing and singing.

The appearance of spring was hailed with celebration of the Vasantotsava which was also called Ritu-utsava.[7] It was celebrated on the full-moon day of Chaitra, and on this day coloured water (Varṇodaka) was sprinkled on passers by with syringes. This is more akin to the present Holī festival.

In the rainy season when the rainbow was first seen, the Puruhutadhvaja was celebrated from the eighth to the twelfth day of Bhādrapada in honour of the God of rain (Indra). It also involved the erection of a post with a flag attached to it. The Devī Purāṇa as quoted in the 'Rājadharmakāṇḍa' of Lakshmīdhara, says[8] that the performance of this ceremony with proper rituals assures victory for the king and prosperity for the kingdom. It was the duty of the king to raise the staff with due pomp. The courtiers, soldiers and prominent citizens had to attend it. Dancers and musicians showed their skill on the occasion and the streets were adorned with flags and plantain trees. Fairs used to be held in the area surrounding the flag staff.

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[1] Rao (Mrs.), *Kaumudī-Mahotsava*, Intro., p. 36.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 55.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 5.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 97.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] G.O.S., vol. No. c, p. 184.
[7] *Raghuvaṁśa*, ix, 46, p. 98.
[8] G.O.S., vol. No. c, p. 184.

One of the other festivals, which people used to celebrate, was the birth-day ceremony. It is evident from the Chinese travellers' accounts and from an inscription found in the district of Bhagalpur that the Buddhists as well as the Hindus used to celebrate the birthday ceremony of their deities. For example, as pointed out by Fa-Hien,[1] the Buddhists in Pāṭaliputra used to celebrate the birthday of Lord Buddha. On this occasion as stated by Fa-Hien, people took out a procession, carrying an image of the Buddha on a chariot. This was accompanied by music, atheletic feats, etc. The non-Buddhists were also taking part in such processions. This shows the mutual understanding between the different religious sects.

The Vaṭeśvarasthāna Inscription[2] from Bhagalpur District states that the people of that locality used to celebrate the birthday ceremony of God Śiva. The word "Varsha-Vardhana" as also "Varsha-Vriddhi" seems to indicate an annual festival or ceremony celebrating a birthday. The celebration is said to have occurred in the fourth quarter of the Nakshatra called Punarvasu in the second Tithi of the bright half of the month of Ashāḍha.

Besides the above-mentioned Vratas and ceremonies, the Agni Purāṇa[3] mentions Gayā-tīrtha as the place of Hindu Pilgrimage for performing Śrāddha ceremony. The Vāyu Purāṇa[4] also refers to Gayā-mahātmya. Both these Purāṇas have emphasised in a more or less similar manner the legendary significance of Gayā. How far the stories (narrated therein) are historical truths, it is difficult to determine.

According to the Agni Purāṇa, the legendary story of the Gayā-mahāt-mya is as follows : A demon named Gayāsura practised austere penance. Being afraid of this penance, the Gods approached God Vishṇu to protect them from the hands of Gayāsura. Thereupon Vishṇu went to Gayāsura and asked him what boon he wished for. Gayāsura asked that the place where he lived (i.e., Gayā) should become the holiest of all the sacred places. Vishṇu blessed it to be so. Then Brahmā went to Gayāsura and demanded his body as an offering in sacrifice. Gayāsura delivered his body to Brahmā. The latter sacrificed the demon's body and made the final oblation there according to the direction of God Vishṇu. This legendary eulogy, heightened the popularity of Gayā as the place of high sanctity, particularly as the place for offering oblations for the release of the departed spirits. Thus, the Agni-Purāṇa whose date may be placed in the Pāla period, clearly emphasised Gayā's sacred character as a Tīrtha. However, even much before that period Gayā was popular as a place for performing the Śrāddha ceremony. The importance of this ceremony is recog-nised in the Mahābhārata, and unlike other Tīrthas, Gayā receives mention in the Smritis.[5] This ancient importance of Gayā has continued all through till the present day. It is noteworthy that in the accounts of the Chinese travellers

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[1] Legge, p. 79.
[2] J.B.R.S., xxxvii, pt. iii and iv, p. 4.
[3] *Agni Purāṇa*, chapts. 114-17.
[4] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, chapts. 105-20.
[5] G.O.S., xcii, pp. lxxxiii-iv.

we do not find any mention of Gayā as an important place for Śrāddha ceremonies. In fact, Fà-Hien[1] describes Gayā as desolate and deserted while Yuan Chwang[2] remarks that the city had "but few inhabitants" and there were only "about one thousand families of Brāhmaṇas" living there. The contemporary Buddhist literature also makes no reference to it. This omission may be due to the fact that the Buddhists attached little importance to the ceremony. None the less, according to Buddhist literature[3] they did attach significance to the performance of oblations in the holy water of the tank and the Phalgu River. This might be taken as evidence supporting the existence of the importance of Gayā for the Hindus.

The worship of the Ganges has been popular with the Hindus from very ancient times and as the Ganges flows through Bihar, the Hindus here also must have recognised the merits of the worship of the Ganges. The Agni Purāṇa[4] tells us that the Ganges imparts to people enjoyment of earthly cheer in this life and salvation in the next. There were seven modes of worship of the Ganges, viz., (i) Calling out the Goddess as 'Oh Gaṅgā' (ii) Seeing (iii) Touching (iv) Drinking its water (v) Worshipping and bathing in it (vi) Standing in the waters of Ganges (which is identical with one's stay in heaven) and (vii) Carrying the clay dug out of the river-bed.

Epigraphical references further support this fact that in those days Gangā-Mahātmya had great importance in the life of the people. For example, we find that the Buddhist ruler, Vigrahapāla I, poured holy water over his own head for the welfare of his empire.[5] Mahipāla I[6] also took bath in the Ganges on the occasion of Saṁkrāntī. All these go to prove that a bath in the Ganges was considered very sacred and auspicious. Even today it is of great significance to take bath in the Ganges. The Ganges is man's last refuge (Gati). The ridicule that the Siddhas hurled at the supposed merit of the religious bath is an indirect proof of the popularity of this belief among the people.[7]

It is significant to note that ending life by throwing oneself into fire on the bank of a sacred river was a form of religious sacrifice. This if performed assured eternal bliss in heaven. This practice was quite in vogue in the period under review.[8] We find Kumāra Gupta (a later Gupta king) cherished heroism and adherence to truth, went to Prayāga, and there "honourably decorated with flowers, plunged into a fire kindled with dry

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[1] Legge, p. 89.
[2] Watters, ii, p. 110.
[3] Barua, *Gayā and Bodh-Gayā*, i, p. 91.
[4] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 110.
[5] *E.I.*, ii, p. 166.
[6] *ibid.*, xxix, p. 2.
[7] J.D.L., xxviii, p. 11, v. 15 (Sarahapā) Kintaha tithya tapovaṇa jāi Mokkha ki labhayī pāṇi nhāi.
[8] We find during this period, kings like Dhaṅga and Gāṅgeyadeva ended their lives in the same manner (see, J.U.P.H.S., x, pt. i, p. 71). Rāmapāla died by plunging himself into the waters of the Ganges. Śūdraka of the Mrichchakatikā embraced death by leaping into a sacrificial fire. Chālukya king Āhavamalla committed religious suicide.

cowdung cakes as if (simply plunging to bathe) in water."[1]

From Yuan Chwang's account,[2] we get a fairly clear idea of the various ways of disposal of the dead and of the funeral rites involved, as well as the custom of mourning prevalent during the period under review. There were three recognised ways of disposing of the dead and performing the last rites. The first was the cremation of the body on a pyre. The second was water-burial, the corpse being put in a stream to float and wash away. The third was to leave the dead body in the wood, so that wild animals fed on it.[3] In Yuan Chwang's account,[4] we also find the mention of the prevalence of a custom in which a very old man who was afflicted with an incurable disease was taken in a boat to the middle of the river stream so that he could drown himself. This act was said to lead him to heaven. However, the Chinese traveller does mention that not all old and ailing people followed this procedure. Some of them even changed their minds at the last moment before jumping into the stream.

In a family which was affected by death nobody took food before the funeral rites had been performed. Those who attended a funeral were regarded as unclean and they all had to wash themselves outside the city walls before returning.[5] The site of funeral, therefore, must have been outside the city. The funeral rites commenced soon after the death of a person. According to Kālidāsa,[6] it lasted ten days after the death. The offering of rice-ball (Piṇḍa) by sons to their departed parents was considered meritorious.[7]

The Buddhists were forbidden to weep on the death of their relations, which may be taken to mean that weeping was quite common in the society. On the death of their parents they used to read a service of gratitude, and prayed for peace to the departed souls.[8] I-tsing[9] has recorded that the Buddhist monks or nuns never took an active part in a funeral service, but they observed the same mourning as common people. He has also described how some used to prepare a shrine for the dead in their rooms, and make offerings or spread out a coloured cloth to show that they were in mourning. Others used to keep their hair unshaven. Contrary to the usual practice, one carried a mourning stick or slept on a straw-mat.

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 205.
[2] Watters, i, pp. 174-75.
[3] *ibid.*
[4] *ibid.*, p. 175.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *Raghuvaṁśa*, viii. 73.
[7] *ibid.*, viii. 26.
[8] Watters, i, p. 175.
[9] Takakusu, I-*tsing*, p. 81.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC CONDITION

AFTER the break up of the Kushāṇa empire in the latter half of the 2nd century A.D., it was under the Imperial Guptas that Northern India regained political unity and administrative efficiency which were essential prerequisites for all round economic progress. With the annexation of W. Malwa and Saurāshṭra by Chandra Gupta II, Vikramāditya gave to the empire the control of important trade routes and ports, and consequently a lion's share in the trade with the West. The fact that Magadha was the centre of the Gupta empire must have enabled it to enjoy the fruits of increased economic activities. The Hūṇa invasions and the disintegration of the Gupta empire and the consequent political instability must have reacted unfavourably on the economic life of the heart of the empire. The later Guptas, the Maukharis, the Gauḍas and the Vardhanas who in turn sought to fill up the 'power-vacuum' in Magadha do not appear to have supplied as stable and durable a political authority as the Imperial Guptas. With the rise of the Pālas, we enter again on a long period of stable and efficient administration in which economic life was in full stride. Magadha being no less important than Bengal in the eyes of the Pāla rulers naturally shared fully in the economic activities of the period.

The period under review witnessed striking development in industry, trade and agriculture. The subject is studied under the following heads: Industries, Guild-organisation, Trade and trade-routes, Medium of exchange, Agriculture and Land-problem.

INDUSTRIES

India has been famous for its crafts and industries from ancient times. It is evident from literary and archæological references that these industries continued to prosper throughout the country. We learn from Kauṭilya's 'Arthaśāstra'[1] that among the important industries of the state were textile, and articles made from ivory, metal, stone, wood and glass. Besides the above mentioned industries, pottery-industry was well-developed and it provided means of livelihood to a large number of people, as is evident from the archæological finds.

Heavy demand for textile goods by the people must have been responsible for the growth of textile industry in the State. Besides, there was a considerable demand for fine Indian textile in the Roman Empire. That Indian spinners and weavers could produce semi-transparent silks and muslin of extreme fineness is clearly depicted in the sculptures of the period. Production

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[1] Shamasastri, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, pp. 82-89, 107-09, 125.

of Patronā, a kind of coarse silk at Magadha leads to the conclusion that silk industry existed there.[1] The statues belonging to the Gupta period show that designs on clothes were embroidered;[2] embroidery must have been a flourishing handicraft.

Industry based on ivory articles was another notable feature of the economic life of the people. We learn from the "Periplus of the Erythrean Sea" that there was a great demand for Indian ivory in the Roman markets at the beginning of the Christian era. This industry continued to flourish in the period as is evident from the archæological discoveries. Many dice,[3] one foot-sandal[4] and a lamp-stand[5] of ivory have been found in the excavations at Kumrahar, Nālandā and Basarh.

Metal industry occupied an equally important place. It can safely be assumed that mining of iron, copper and mica in Chotanagpur plateau continued in the Gupta period.[6] For the manufacture and repair of agricultural implements the services of blacksmiths were indispensable. The archæological finds (in the excavations at Basarh, Kumrahar, Bulandibagh and Nālandā) have proved that apart from agricultural implements, blacksmiths manufactured other articles of general use like axes[7] and weapons of war, such as arrow-heads,[8] spear-heads,[9] swords and knives.[10] We learn from the Agni-Purāṇa,[11] that Aṅga (Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts) was one of the five centres for manufacturing swords in India. Many other objects such as locks, bangles, rings, hair ornaments and utensils of iron have also been found at these places.[12] Copper was used for making copperplates for purpose of issuing charters. Samudra Gupta's, Dharmapāla's and Devapāla's copperplates have been found. Copper coins were issued. And copper was used in making statues.

The finest example of highly developed iron metallurgy of the period is the famous Iron Pillar at Mehrauli near Delhi, bearing the inscription of Emperor Chandra, generally identified with Chandra Gupta II[13] of the Gupta

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[1] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, vol. 1, p. 655.

[2] Supra, p. 25.

[3] Kumrahar excavations have yielded about four ivory dice. Report on Kumrahar excavations, p. 136.

[4] Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 32, 2953 (ivory sandal); another finding of ivory at Nālandā is a miniature Stupa, Arch. No. 16.218.

[5] A.S.R., 1903-04, pl. xxxix (ivory lamp-stand), p. 97.

[6] Maity, *The Economic Life of Northern India in the Gupta Period*, p. 99.

[7] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 182 (iron axe head, finding No. 743). Another axe-head has been found at Kumrahar excavations.

[8] A.S.I. (N.I.S.), No. li, p. 100.

[9] A.S.R., 1913-14, No. 185, finding No. 5 (spear-head).

[10] A.S.I. (N.I.S.), No. li, p. 100 (long sword).

[11] *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. ccxlv, p. 886.

[12] A.S.R., 1913-14, pp. 160, 172, 7164, refer to bangles and utensils. Nālandā Museum, Arch. No. 26.1659 (lock) 32.2862 (knife), 25.1203 (spoon), 16.327 (pincer) etc.; Kumrahar excavations have yielded a number of metal ear-rings, wrist bangles etc.

[13] *E.I.*, xiv, p. 367.

dynasty. Though out of Bihar, it bears eloquent testimony to the marvellous metallurgical skill of the period. It is remarkable that after an exposure to wind and rain for fifteen centuries (its probable date is assigned to 400 A. D.), it is not rusted and the capital and inscriptions are very clear and sharp even now.

Metal-workers also practised the art of bronze and copper casting with considerable skill. The art of bronze and copper casting is very ancient in our country.[1] The discovery of a large number of bronze and copper images at Nālandā, Kurkihar and other parts of Bihar belonging to the period points to highly developed bronze and copper industries in the State. Fashioning images in bronze or Ashṭadhātu appears to have been a prosperous industry. A remarkable copper statue of the Buddha discovered at Sultanganj and at present preserved in the Birmingham Museum, is symbolic of the metallurgical and artistic skill of the people of the fifth century A.D. Many small standing Buddha figures of copper were also found near it. The presence of lumps of copper ore suggests that the melting and casting operations were done on the spot.[2] The evidence of metal casting is further supported by the discoveries of a series of oven marks within the boundary of the Nālandā ruins. We also have a reference by Hiuen-Tsiang[3] to another gigantic copper colossus of Buddha image about eighty feet in height.

The great artists called Dhīmana and Biṭpāla are said to be responsible for such highly developed and artistic bronze work of this period. Referring to them Tāranātha[4] writes, "In the time of the kings Devapāla and Dharmapāla, a highly talented artist, Dhīmana by name, lived in Varendra; the name of his son was Biṭpāla. Both of them made several works of art in metal and stone and also painting." Biṭpāla was definitely connected with Magadha as is evident from Tāranātha. The skill and artistic beauty of the bronze images and other objects discovered at Nālandā, Kurkihar and other places in Bihar and at present preserved in the Patna and Nālandā Museums, are evidence to the fact that the art of bronze-casting was fully developed. All these go to show that bronze industry in Bihar had scaled great heights during the period under review. The markets for these goods (images) were not confined to India, but were even outside the country. We find the art of Nālandā school had extended far beyond the boundaries of India. The Javanese art is influenced by the art of Nālandā. We learn from the Nālandā Copperplate of Devapāla[5] that there were intimate contacts between India and Java, and the people of Java might have taken away some images from Nālandā and imitated their models.

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[1] Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilisation*, i, pp. 30-37. Reference to a bronze dancing girl, pp. 44-45.

[2] Neogi, *Copper in Ancient India*, p. 21; Smith, *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, pp. 171-72.

[3] Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, ii, p. 174.

[4] A.S.R., 1921-22, p. 104, mentions Nālandā instead of Varendra; J.B.O. R.S., xxx, p. 159.

[5] *E.I.*, xvii, p. 310.

The art of making jewellery must have been very flourishing and given considerable employment to a large number of people. The literature and sculptures[1] of this period show that a large variety of ornaments were used by men and women. These indicate a vigorous and flourishing condition of the jeweller's art. Ornaments were made of precious stones, gold, silver, copper, etc. The highly developed art of making ornaments of precious stones gave rise to a branch of science called 'Ratnaparikshā' (examination of jewels) which was sufficiently old to be included among the sixty-four subsidiary branches of knowledge in Vātsyāyana's 'Kāma Sūtra.'[2] In the Mudrārākshasa we are told of one Vishṇudāsa, a prominent jeweller in the city of Kusumapura (Pāṭaliputra).[3]

The art of the workers in semi-precious stones which may be traced back to the pre-historic Indus culture continued to be practised here in the period of survey, as is evident from the archæological excavations carried out at different places in this State. These excavations[4] have yielded a large number of beads and other small objects of jasper, agate, carnelian, quartz, lapis-lazuli, glass and the like from the Maurya to Gupta strata. The range of the colours of these beads is pretty wide. They are of different colours, such as white, black, red, green, grey, pinkish-white and of different mixed colours. The range of bead-shapes is not very large. The main shapes represented are spherical, spheroid, pear-shaped, cylindrical, barrel, truncated, bicone, oblate and collared. Thus we find that bead-making was an important and highly developed industry in the State. Beads were used in preparing ornaments of different varieties. In this connection the extensive glass industry[5] of this State may also be noted.

Besides the industries mentioned above, fashioning stone images was a profitable industry. The numerous stone images discovered throughout the State and belonging to the period under review, bear eloquent testimony to both the volume and skill of the stone carver's profession. A Pāla inscription[6] in Bengal refers to the name of a Magadhan Śilpi, Someśvara, who was supposed to have been an artist of high order and a specialist in stone carving. Nālandā Pillar Inscription[7] further refers to an artist who was the son of Subhadāsa. Stone was also used extensively for building purposes. The famous Mahābodhi temple built of stone is a standing monument to the excellence of stone architecture in the Gupta period. The architectural remains of the Śiva Temple[8] on Vaibhārgiri at Rājgir, belonging to the 8th century A.D. further testify to the developed stone work in Bihar.

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[1] Supra, p. 26.

[2] Gambler, *Kāmasūtra*, p. 46.

[3] *Mudrārākshasa*, Act vi.

[4] The excavations carried at Basarh, Pāṭaliputra and Nālandā have yielded a large number of beads including of terra-cotta. Basarh collection is specially richer (A.S.R. 1903-04, pp. 155-185).

[5] J.B.O.R.S., x, p. 197.

[6] *E.I.*, xiii, p. 283.

[7] I.A., xlvii, p. 111.

[8] Ghosh, *A Guide to Rāigir*, p. 11.

That the pottery industry was also well-developed in this State during the period is abundantly clear from the large number of potteries of different types and varieties, such as cooking utensils, dishes, cups, saucers, ink-pots, lamps of various designs and toys found here in the excavations at Kumrahar, Basarh, Nālandā, etc. These supply us positive proofs of the flourishing state of pottery industry during the period under review. Potters were skilled not only in moulding different shapes of pottery but also in baking and colouring. Most of the pottery was wheel-made, but hand-made toys, or figurines are found as well.

References in Kāmasūtra and in the works of Kālidāsa to wooden furniture and use of wood in residential houses lead us to conclude that there must have been a class of people who were earning their bread by wood-carving and carpentry. Owing to the perishable nature of wood, very few specimens of wood-carving of this period have come down to us. A complete wooden chariot wheel is perhaps the most interesting of all the finds from Bulundibagh (near Patna).[1] The iron band round the hub is still in its place. Mudrārākshasa refers to the large number of carpenters in the city of Pāṭaliputra. They decorated the palace and gates with beautiful carvings.[2] Fa-Hien describing the procession of the Buddha's images during festivities in Pāṭaliputra refers to a five-storied bamboo structure upon a four-wheeled car.[3]

GUILD ORGANISATION

It is evident from the foregoing accounts that a large number of industries were in a flourishing state during the period under review. Formation of guilds put these industries on a sound and economical footing. Majumdar[4] aptly writes ".....no nation that lacks in this essential element of culture can hope to keep pace with the progress of the world." He further says, "India at present is very backward in this particular aspect of culture, but when we look to our past we find that the things were quite different." The presence of Guild Organisation has been established from early literature, inscriptions and seals. The Jātakas[5] frequently make references to the organisation of traders into a corporate body with an elder or headman who held a high post in the State and was a favourite of the king, besides being rich. It has been deduced from Gautama[6] that nearly all the important branches of industry formed themselves into guilds. Arthaśāstra[7] throws considerable light upon the guild organisations of its time. These guild organisations continued in our period and their activities and importance in the State in the early Gupta

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[1] A.S.R. 1903-04, p. 101.
[2] *Mudrārākshasa*, ii, p. 56.
[3] Legge, p. 25.
[4] Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. i (Intro.).
[5] Jātaka, Nos. 154 and 335.
[6] Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. 3.
[7] Shamasastri, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, pp. 209-11.

period are proved by a number of clay seals unearthed at Basarh.[1]

The abundance of seals found at only one place like Basarh (Vaiśālī) proves the great part played by the guilds in the economic life of the country. From the shape of clay pieces it is evident that they were attached to letters or other literary documents.[2] It proves the briskness of the correspondence carried on by the ancient guilds, and this is a positive testimony to their activity and importance in those days.

Paucity of historical materials makes it difficult to describe the constitution of these guilds. Any idea about their importance can be had from the clay seals and inscriptions which make occasional references about them.

As pointed out by the early Dharamaśāstra writer, Yājñavalkya,[3] these guilds were autonomous bodies having their own rules, regulations and bye-laws which were actually accepted and respected by the State. Disputes among the members were settled by their own executive and, failing that, by the State Tribunal. Sometimes guilds of different professions federated themselves into a large corporation as is clear from a seal from Basarh[4] bearing the legend Śreshṭhi Kulika-Nigamasya, i.e., of the corporation of bankers and merchants. However, we find that private seals were also used extensively. Sometimes, two or even more of the seals[5] of private individuals were combined with each other or with the seal of the guild of which evidently most of them were members. Such seals indicate the partnership transaction. Joint seals of two merchants clearly attest to their partnership in different transactions.

Trades and industries, both big and small, were organised into guilds. The seals bring to light the existence of the guilds (Nigama) of bankers (Śreshṭhī), traders (Sārthavāhas) and merchants (Kulika).[6] Then there were guilds of manual workers like weavers, oilmen and stone-cutters.[7] A seal found in the Kumrahar excavation, proves the existence of the guild of betel-leaf sellers in the Gupta period.[8] A rare seal from Basarh[9] indicates that the guilds had their President. It mentions a person, Hari by name, who styled himself both Kulika[10] and Prathama Kulika.[11] This shows that he was the President of the guild of merchants. From these seals we may further conclude that the membership of the guilds might have spread over a large number of towns and cities in Northern India. Most of these seals were received by the provincial Government of Vaiśālī from the different branches of the great organisations.

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[1] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 101.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] Sharma, *Yājñavalkyasmriti* (Hindi Trans.), p. 338.
[4] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 101, seal No. 29.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *ibid.*
[7] *ibid.*
[8] Report on Kumrahar excavations, p. 104.
[9] A.S.R.S., 1903-04, p. 104, seal No. 99.
[10] *ibid.*, seal Nos. 76-77.
[11] *ibid.*, seal No. 99.

In order to secure and lend capital (which is essential for any industry or trade organisation) the guilds were also doing banking business. They received permanent deposits guaranteeing regular payment of interest. Such deposits were made by donors in the shape of endowments and the guilds were directed by the donors to utilise the interest of the deposits for the specific objects which the donors had in view. The Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription[1] of Skanda Gupta records the creation of a permanent endowment, aptly called Akshayanivi, with a guild of the town of Ājapuraka, identified with the village Ajayapur, near Bihar Police Station. This shows the prestige of the guild as banking organisation. On epigraphic evidences from Nasik and Junar, Majumdar[2] points out that "the guilds in ancient days received deposits of public money and paid regular interest on them. They received not merely deposits in cash, but also endowment of property." The references to Śreshṭhi in the seals from Basarh[3] prove the banking activities of the guilds. All these go to show the intensive and extensive corporate economic activities in Bihar. Bloch[4] goes so far as to say that "It looks as if during those days something like modern Chamber of Commerce existed in upper India at some big trading centre, perhaps Pāṭaliputra." This is apparently an exaggeration as it would be too much to expect a modern complex organisation as a Chamber of Commerce in those days.

Activities of the guild organisations continued at least up to the sixth century A.D. as is evident from the Damodarpur Copperplates[5] which refer to the following prominent members of the guilds such as Nagara Śreshṭhi, Prathama Sārthavāha and Prathama Kulika, who were the Presidents of the guilds of the bankers, traders and merchants respectively. Nārada[6] also refers to the advancement of the guild organisations during his period. He explicitly states that "the king must make use of the guilds and other corporations." This shows the high importance attached to the guild organisations.

There is no positive evidence about the guilds in Bihar during the Pāla period, although for the same period there is ample evidence of brisk guild activities in other parts of India.[7] The organisation might have continued here in this period though the evidences are lacking.

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, vol. iii, p. 50. Chandra Gupta II and Kumāra Gupta I also deposited money with guilds: *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 38, p. 407.

[2] Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. 10.

[3] A.S.R., 1903-04, p. 104, seal Nos. 109-10.

[4] *ibid.*, p. 104.

[5] *E.I.*, xv, p. 130.

[6] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, pp. 153-54.

[7] An inscription at the Vallabhaṭṭa-Svāmi Temple at Gwalior (*E.I.*, i, p. 159) refers to the organisation of Śreshṭhīs and Sārthavāhas etc., in the city of Gwalior in the year 877 A.D. Another inscription (Pohoa Inscription, *E.I.*, i, p. 184) of about the same period, refers to an important guild of horse-dealers. A guild of horse-dealers from the Northern country is also referred to in the Harsha Stone Inscription dated 973-74 A.D. (*E.I.*, ii, p. 166). The Siyadoni Inscription (*E.I.*, i, p. 167) of the latter half of the tenth century A.D., also records the gift of the guilds of betel-sellers, oil-makers and stone-cutters. The guild of Vagulika (hunters) is mentioned in the Karitalai Stone

TRADE AND TRADE-ROUTES

Trade and commerce constitute the most important aspects of any economically progressive State, and this was true of Bihar also. Although for the period under review there is paucity of direct evidence of Bihar's trade relations with countries outside India, we have enough indirect evidences for believing in Bihar's due share in India's brisk trade with far off countries like China, S.E. Asia in the east and the Roman empire in the west. It is quite natural that Bihar being the heart of the Gupta and the Pāla empires must have felt the impact of expansive internal and international trade.

With China, India had land as well as sea connections. The principal overland route to China, opened at the time of Hān,[1] passed through Central Asia. For nearly one thousand years this Central-Asian route remained the most important avenue of the traders and the missionaries from the west to China as well as from China to the west. There were two other overland routes from India to China in ancient times, although they were not commonly used. One of these passed through Assam, Upper Burma and Yunnan, and the other through Nepal and Tibet. The route through Tibet was opened in the second quarter of the seventh century A.D., when the first king of the United Tibetan States, Srong-btsan-sgam-po, was converted to Buddhism and allied himself with China and Nepal by marrying a princess from each of the two countries.[2] The Indo-Tibetan route first came into importance under tragic circumstances in the seventh century A.D. The king of Tibet, Srong-btsan-sgam-po, was a contemporary of Harsha. The death of Harsha in about 646 or 647 A.D. was followed by anarchy and confusion and the succession to the imperial throne was claimed by one of his ministers, Arjuna or Arunāśva, who evidently held sway in Tirābhukti (Tirhut) in North Bihar.[3] According to the story preserved in the Chinese annals, this Arjuna attacked a Chinese mission, under Wang-hiuen-tse, that was sent by the Chinese Emperor to Harsha. For reasons not explained, Arjuna killed most of the members of the mission and plundered their property. Wang-hiuen-tse fled to Nepal, secured 7000 soldiers from Nepal and 12,000 from Tibet, and returning to the Indian plains, disastrously defeated and imprisoned Arjuna and took him as a captive to China. It is said that Wang-hiuen-tse stormed the capital city of Arjuna and about 580 walled towns in India submitted to him. Even Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, sent supplies to the victorious army led by Wang-hiuen-tse. The whole episode took place during 647-648 A.D. in the plains of North Bihar.[4] It is possible that the allied (Chinese-

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Inscription (*E.I.*, ii, p. 174) of Chedi Lakshmanarāja who flourished about the middle of the tenth century A.D., while the Deopara (*E.I.*, i, p. 311) Inscription of Vijayasena refers to Śilpi-goshṭhi, apparently meaning a guild of stone-cutters, in Varendra or North Bengal.

[1] Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 8-10.

[2] J.A.S.B., I, (1181), pt. i, pp. 218-24; Waddell, *Lamaism*, ch. iii, p. 20; Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 16-18.

[3] *History of Tirhut*, p. 51.

[4] J.R.A.S., 1837, pt. i, pp. 69-70.

Tibetan) occupation of parts of North Bihar might have continued for some time and this must have further facilitated the flow of men, ideas and things between the two countries.

Sea-route to China was also well known to the Indians, from the very beginning of the historical period.[1] Description of Fa-Hien about his voyage to China goes to establish the fact that India had regular maritime activities with China and Indonesian countries. In the beginning of the fifth century A. D. when Fa-Hien was returning to China he preferred the sea-route to land-route. Starting from Pāṭaliputra, he followed the course of the Ganges and returned to China on a merchant vessel via Ceylon and Java.[2] It is clear from Fa-Hien's account that there were serious hazards in sea travel; sometimes even the boat leaked.[3] The land-route through central Asia was also full of difficulties and dangers. But still traders and scholars braved all these hardships. It is during the seventh century A.D. that a number of Chinese scholars came to Nālandā by the sea-route.[4] This sea-route to India from China was by way of Java, Sumatra, the straits of Malacca, the coast of Burma and Arakan, to Tāmralipti. From here the travellers proceeded on foot or by boat to various places in India.[5] It is natural to assume that the boats which carried travellers must have also carried goods from one country to another. India's relations with Ceylon were also intimate.

India's maritime activities with the west were equally manifest. The Indian goods were brought to Muza or Aden ports through Barygaza (the ancient port of India in the west), at the mouth of the Red Sea where they were transhipped.[6]

For inland travels and communication, water-ways (in proximity to which stood the principal towns) were well-developed. There is a representation of a large boat with at least three decks and a long oar on a seal discovered at Vaiśālī.[7] This shows the great popularity of water-borne trade on a big scale. That Pāṭaliputra was a centre of river navigation is shown by the Khalimpur Plate of Dharmapāla.[8] This gives a vivid and glorious description of Pāṭaliputra as a river port. It says "From his royal camp of victory pitched at Pāṭaliputra where the manifold fleets of boats proceeding to the mouth of the Bhāgīrathī make it seem as if a series of mountain tops had been sunk to build another cause-way." References to boats for crossing the rivers like the Gangā and the Yamunā and boats with masts are met with in the

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[1] Mookerji, *A History of the Indian Shipping*, pp. 113-14. He refers to seafaring pirates called Nāgas, probably the Chinese, who were worshippers of the Drägon (during the reign of Aśoka).

[2] Legge, pp. 100, 113-14.

[3] *ibid.*, pp. 111-114.

[4] Supra, pp. 50-51.

[5] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 199.

[6] Rawilson, *Intercourse between India and the Western World*, pp. 94-95.

[7] A.S.R., 1913-14, pp. 129-30.

[8] *E.I.*, iv, p. 254.

couplets of the Siddhas.[1]

Many land-routes, connecting different parts of the country were also available for traders and travellers. Fa-Hien and Hiuen Tsiang travelled by many such routes. A trade-route ran from Sāvatthi (Śrāvastī) to Rājagaha (Rājagriha), passing through Setavya, Kapilavastu, Kuśināra, Pāvā, Hatthigāma, Bhandagāma, Vaiśālī and across Pāṭaliputra by the river and it ran upto Nālandā. The road probably went to Gayā, and there met another route from the east possibly from Tāmralipti to Vārāṇasī.[2] From the Dudhapani Inscription belonging to the district of Hazaribagh, we learn that an inland trade route from Ayodhyā to Tāmralipti passed through south Magadha, more particularly through Chota Nagpur region. The Inscription on palæographic grounds belongs to the 8th century A.D. It refers to three brothers—Udayamāna, Śrīdharamāna and Ajitamāna going on their business from Ayodhyā to Tāmralipti, and staying on their way in one of the villages, Bhramaṇaśālmali near Dudhapani. Ādisimha, the king of Magadha, granted favours to them and with the king's approval Udayamāna and his two other brothers became masters of three villages including Bhramaṇaśālmali.[3]

It is well known that up to the early Christian era, India had extensive trades with the Roman Empire and it exported among other things fine Indian muslin, jewels, pearls and ivory goods.[4] Besides, Pāṭaliputra became a market place for goods from many countries.[5] There is no reason to believe that this state of international trade did not continue during the period.

For development of internal trade, markets or marts were set up often under the king's patronage or initiative. An Inscription on a bronze image from Nālandā refers to Devapāladeva-haṭṭa near Nālandā,[6] meaning a market founded by Devapāla. Another seal from Nālandā refers to Śrī Nālandā Śrī Dharamahaṭṭa.[7] One other inscription on an image of Avalokiteśvara found in the Sūrya temple at Bargaon near Nālandā refers to another Haṭṭa or mart named Talahaṭṭa (?) in Nālandā.[8]

MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE

Discoveries of a large number of coins mainly of gold issued by the Gupta rulers indicate that these coins formed the medium of exchange during their rule. The quality of metal issued from time to time by different rulers

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[1] J.D.L., xxviii, v. 10, p. 117 (refers to boat 'Nāva'): v. 14, p. 121, Dombipā—"Gangā Jamunā mājha re bahai nāi"; Dharmasvāmin, the Tibetan scholar, who visited Bihar in 1232-34 A.D. refers to boats which could carry 300 passengers across the Gangā to Magadha from North Bihar.

[2] Rhys-Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 64.

[3] *E.I.*, ii, pp. 343 ff.

[4] Rawilson, *Intercourse between India and Western World*, pp. 101-62.

[5] *ibid.*, p. 43.

[6] *E.I.*, xxv, pp. 334-335.

[7] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 103.

[8] *E.I.*, xxv, p. 334, footnote B.

varied,[1] and this indirectly may indicate the economic vicissitudes in the life of the country. In the beginning when the Gupta rulers came to power they issued coins of high purity. But later on coins were debased by their successors. It is rather strange that during the time of the Pālas gold coins became very rare. So far only one coin has been discovered.[2]

The weight system of the Gupta gold coins is a bit irregular, but from the early specimen of gold coins, it has been concluded that the early Gupta emperors on the whole followed the standard of the Kushāṇa prototype weighing about 121 grains.[3] It was perhaps to maintain a balance in the market which was established by the Kushāṇas,[4] that they adopted the foreign weight standard for their coins. According to Manu,[5] the standard weight of a gold coin was eighty Raṭṭis or about 146 grains, but none of the early Gupta rulers followed this traditional weight standard. From the time of Skanda Gupta onwards a deliberate attempt seems to have been made to revert to the old Hindu Suvarṇa standard of 146 grains.[6] But though the coins are heavier, from the time of the successors of Skanda Gupta there is a steep debasement of the currency, and the quality of pure gold is much less in percentage compared to the gold coins of the earlier kings.[7] Maity suggests that the minting and provenance of gold coins in the Gupta period might have been facilitated by mining of gold mines in Bihar and by the existence of 'commercial transaction on a larger scale.'[8] As regards their silver coins, we get a considerable variation in weight. They had tried to follow the standard weight of silver, Karshāpaṇa, i.e., 36 grains.[9]

The Gupta epigraphic records[10] mention two varieties of coins, viz., the Dināra and the Rūpaka, as the medium of exchange in purchasing lands. The former denotes a gold coin, whereas the latter denotes the silver coins of the Gupta monarchs. It is difficult to state the rate of exchange between the two. The disparity between the price of gold and that of silver or copper was much less than what it is now.[11] This fact becomes more intricate when we find the later Gupta rulers issuing gold coins of Suvarṇa standard, debased in metal content and inferior in execution to those of the early coins. This may suggest hard times for the royal treasury.

During the Pāla period, 'Cowries' (a kind of small sea-shells) were the

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[1] Sinha, *Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha*, Appendix I, pp. 425-26; Maity, *Economic Life of Northern India in Gupta Period*, Appendix III, pp. 202 ff.

[2] J.N.S.I., xiii, p. 123.

[3] Altekar, *Bayana Hoard*, pp. cxx-xi.

[4] Maity, op. cit., p. 167.

[5] Manu, vii, 134, p. 277 (*S.B.E.*, xxv).

[6] Altekar, *Bayana Hoard*, p. cxxviii.

[7] Sinha, op. cit., Appendix I, pp. 424-6; Maity, op. cit., Appendix III, pp. 203-06.

[8] Maity, op. cit., pp. 168 ff.

[9] Altekar, *Bayana Hoard*, p. cxxxiv.

[10] *E.I.*, xxi, p. 78; Fleet, op. cit., pp. 39-41,64, 264.

[11] Altekar, *Bayana Hoard*, p. cxxi.

common medium of exchange.[1] References to the 'Cowries' and its subdivision 'Bowries' as common medium of exchange and as payment for crossing the river in a boat, are made by the Siddha Dombipā.[2] After achieving the stability of their rule, we also find the Pāla rulers issuing minted currency in silver and copper, although very few specimens have so far been discovered.[3] Bodh-Gayā Inscription[4] of Dharmapāla, refers the term Dramma as a designation of coins. So the coins having the legend Śrī-Vigraha attributed to king Vigrahapāla are generally called Vigrahapāla-dramma. When we think of the long rule of the Pāla dynasty and the extent of its kingdom, its lack of currency becomes an intriguing problem which cannot be adequately explained in the present state of our knowledge. Bhusukupā refers to 'gold and silver' but it is not clear whether he refers to coins or metal.[5] A gold coin of Devapāla has been recently discovered.[6]

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was the mainstay of the majority of the people. The land was very fertile and there was abundance of food.[7] Among the food crops cultivated rice and wheat were the main. Fine quality of rice grown in Magadha known as Mahāśila rice has been already referred to. Remains of fine quality of wheat have been discovered in the Nālandā monastery. Sugarcane was also cultivated. Dharmasvāmin refers to standing sugarcane crops on both sides of the road in North-Bihar. Dyes were also cultivated—probably indigo, as the Tibetan scholar of the early 13th century returned with vast quantity of dyes and sugar from India.[8] The Buddhist literature throws a good measure of light on the system of land cultivation under the Buddhist monasteries which owned considerable land as a result of gifts. These religious institutions had thus to carry on their own agricultural activities. The Buddhist Samghas had come to own large landed properties some of which they directly cultivated and some they got cultivated by others on profitable terms. According to the Mahāvagga,[9] the Samgha would ordinarily arrange to have the cultivation of its land undertaken by the professional peasants on the basis of the sharing of the produce. With a view to earning more profits the Samgha would sometimes prefer to stock the seed which would be borrowed to be sown on land owned by private persons on the same terms of division of produce between the two parties. Seedlings were generally

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[1] Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, vol. i, pp. 667-69.

[2] J.D.L., xxviii, v. 14, p. 121 (Cowri na laī bori na laī).

[3] Supra, p. 150.

[4] J.A.S.B. (N.S.), iv, p. 101.

[5] J.D.L., xxx, p. 154, 'Sonaha rua ṁora kimpi ṇa thākiu.'

[6] J.N.S.I., xiii, p. 122 ff.

[7] Watters, ii, pp. 63, 81, 86.

[8] *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. 58. In *Raghuvaṁśa* (iv. 20) there are references to sugarcane cultivation (Supra p. 18).

[9] *S.B.E.*, vol. xiii, vi. 39.

divided in equal shares between the owner of the seeds and of the land on which the seeds were sown. Perhaps this system must have prevailed in those monasteries which had small lands to cultivate. (Crop-sharing system between the owners and actual cultivators still prevails).

From what he saw at Nālandā, I-Tsing throws further light on the system by which a Samgha arranged for the cultivation of its land. He states,[1] "According to the teaching of the Vinaya when a corn-field is cultivated by the Samgha, a share in the produce is to be given to the monastic servants or some others by whom the actual tilling has been done. Every produce should be divided into six parts, and one-sixth should be levied by the Samgha; the Samgha has to provide with bulls as well as the land for cultivation, while the Samgha is responsible for nothing else. Sometimes the division of the produce should be modified according to seasons." Further he writes, "Most of the monasteries follow the above custom, but there are some who are very avaricious and do not divide the produce, but the priests themselves give the work to servants, male and female, and see that the farming is properly done."

Thus from the foregoing statements it is evident that two systems of land-cultivation were prevailing during the period. First it was cultivated by the owner of the land himself directly, by employing his own labourers and equipment. Secondly, the owner gave the land to others to cultivate on the terms of sharing the produce. Besides, we find the Gupta rulers giving due encouragement for the cultivation of waste-lands (Khila) by selling them to individuals on liberal terms.[2] Nārada provides that if land is kept fallow by the owner for any reason, it may be cultivated by others.[3] It shows the anxiety to maintain and increase production and not to allow it to be neglected. In the interest of agriculture and agricultural produce, Nārada enjoins that whoever destroys or disfigures roots, fruits, water and the like or agricultural implements should be treated as guilty of committing an act of Sāhasa[4] (robbery).

From the large number of examples of grants of land or its sale or purchase, it appears that there was great demand for land, and agriculture was a popular and profitable profession. Though there is no positive evidence of any pestilence, draught or famine affecting agriculture in the State of Bihar during the period, it is very likely that then as now, being in monsoon region, draught, pestilence and famine might have affected agriculture. Kauṭilya refers to famines and pestilences; Megasthenes refers to fowlers, hunters etc. as destroyers of forests. Varāhamihira mentions of draught many times.[5] Kauṭilya refers to concessions given by the king to the cultivators

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[1] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, p. 61.

[2] *E.I.*, xxiii, p. 55; *ibid.*, xv, p. 131.

[3] Nārada, xi. 23; Kauṭilya, much earlier, had provided that lands may be confiscated from those who do not cultivate them (Shamasastry, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, p. 46, 3rd ed.) "Akoshatamachchhidyānyebhyaḥ prāyachchhit."

[4] Nārada, xiv. 417.

[5] Maity, op. cit., Appendix I.

in distress.[1] Samudra Gupta is stated to have been the sustenance of the poor, the helpless and the afflicted. The interest of the Gupta emperors in irrigation works is proved by the Junāgarh Inscription of Skanda Gupta. Though there is no pointed reference to irrigation works in Bihar during the period, one can safely assume that the heart of the empire could not have been neglected. Kauṭilya recommends the king to construct or help in construction or repair of waterworks (Setu).[2] There are references to canals (Jalanirgama) in the Amarakosha.[3]

Forests and forest products are described by Kālidāsa. The Bihar Stone Inscription of Skanda Gupta refers to a class of officers called Gaulmika, who are identified by Fleet as superintendents of forests.[4]

Cattle has remained the principle support of agriculture. Kauṭilya lays great importance on the proper maintenance of cattle. There were superintendents of cows, who also looked after various dairy industries.[5] In the Gupta and the Pāla periods too, concern for cattle must have continued though there are no direct references about cattle.

OWNERSHIP OF LAND

Keeping in view the vital importance of agriculture, it will now be worthwhile to examine the system of transfer or sale of land and how far it affected the right of ownership.

There was keen controversy regarding the ownership of land in ancient India. Lack of conclusive evidence, literary or epigraphic, has given rise to differences of opinion amongst historians regarding the exact position of land-ownership. There are three distinct possibilities :—

(i) That all the land was directly owned by the ruler;

(ii) That there existed only private ownership of land, the ruler only exercising the sovereign rights;

(iii) That there was private ownership as well as State ownership.

On the basis of the early authorities, such as from the writings of Diodorus and from the Manusmriti, it is held that there was no possibility of private ownership of land at least in their times, in India. For example, Diodorus[6] maintained that, in India, land was the property of the Crown and no private individuals were permitted to own it. Similarly, Manu[7] stated that the king was the owner of all the treasures buried underground, by virtue of his ownership of the land. Besides, Bhaṭṭasvāmin[8] also quotes a verse from Kauṭilya's 'Arthaśāstra,' averring that private ownership could have no application in the case of land.

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[1] *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, ch. 1.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *Amarakosha*, 9. 7, p. 62.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, vol. iii, p. 52.
[5] *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, ch. xv.
[6] Monahan, *Early History of Bengal*, p. 142.
[7] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxv, pp. 259-60.
[8] *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, ch. 24.

Many epigraphic evidences (specially, those belonging to the period under review) tend to support the theory of ownership of land by the kings. The inscriptions record the various donations of land or villages made by the rulers to various individuals. For example, the Gayā Copperplate Inscription[1] of Samudra Gupta records the grant of a village named Revatika in the Gayā Vishaya by the king to a Brāhmaṇa. This act entitled the Brāhmaṇa to the taxes which were previously paid by the villagers to the king. The villagers were also required to render general obedience to the donee. Thus the donee became the new owner of the village. This act of gift and donation by the rulers was by no means rare. The Deo-Barnārk Inscription[2] of Jīvita Gupta II reveals how Jīvita Gupta II continued the renewal of the grant of a village Vārunikā to a Brāhmaṇa. Originally the village-grant was made by Bālāditya and later on renewed by the Maukhari king Avantivarman. King Dharmapāla granted four villages to the temple of Nunna Nārāyaṇa and Lāṭa Brāhmaṇa[3]. Devapāla granted revenues of five villages for the maintenance of the monastery constructed by the king of Yavadvīpa.[4] Similarly the Nālandā Copperplate of Dharmapāla[5] and Bhagalpur Copperplate of Nārāyaṇapāla[6] refer to the grants of villages. All these show that the king was the owner of the villages and could make gifts of these. It is not clear whether the king only surrendered to the donee his royal dues from the villages or as owner of all land including entire villages he made gifts of these villages. However, at least as a result of these donations, a new class of hereditary owners of land or villages was created, as the donees certainly passed on their right accrued from donation to their successors, unless specifically mentioned to the contrary. As a matter of fact, generally, the land granted by the king or his predecessor remained the property of the donee. Probably in difficult times the donee or his inheritors might have experienced some difficulties in enjoyment of the gift property and, therefore, we find the successors of the king renewing the grant. Sarvavarman, Avantivarman and his successor renewed the grant made by Bālāditya, and the grant needed again renewal by Jīvita Gupta II.[7] Mihirabhoja renewed the grant made by Nāgabhaṭṭa II which had fallen to disuse during the reign of Rāmabhadra.[8] Thus the donee or his successors remained the owners of the donated property in perpetuity.[9]

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 257.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 218.
[3] *E.I.*, iv, p. 254.
[4] I.A., xxi, p. 253.
[5] M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 89.
[6] I.A., xv, p. 304.
[7] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, pp. 218 ff.
[8] *E.I.*, xix, pp. 15 ff.
[9] Maity gives some evidence of conditional grants, such as the Chammak Copperplate of Pravaraseṇa II, in which if the donee committed treason and broke other conditions, the gift would be void (*Economic Life of Northern India in Gupta Period*, p. 18).

The Nandpur Copperplate[1] and Damodarpur Copperplate[2] Inscriptions prove that a system of the sale of land was in vogue. The Nandpur Copperplate Inscription (belonging to the later half of the fifth century A.D. and found in Monghyr district in Bihar) elaborately records how an individual, in this case a Vishayapati, applied to the local government officials for permission to buy some fallow land, and consequently non-revenue yielding land, belonging to the Crown, was given in order that he may donate it to a Brāhmaṇa for the performance of 'Pañchamahāyajña' (the five sacrifices). The record-keepers reported that the prevalent rate of sale of fallow and non-revenue yielding land in the locality was two Dināras for each Kulyavāpa of land and the applicant accepted to buy four Kulyavāpas of such land at that rate. He was thereafter granted the permission. Similarly, the Damodarpur Copperplate Inscriptions (belonging to the 5th-6th century A.D.) describe the sale of the royal land to individuals for religious purposes. The sale of land was legalised during this period through the medium of sale-deeds, and the transaction of land was settled through the government with the consultation of the record-keeper along with the help of local and district governments and the sale-deeds were preserved in the department of records under 'Akshapṭalādhikrita' (Record-keeper).

But there are evidences to support private ownership of land as well. We have already suggested that by gifts of perpetuity the king was instrumental in raising a class of private landowners. Fa-Hien[3] writes, "only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay (a portion of) the gain from it." This certainly indicates that there was land besides that belonging to the rulers, and this may be taken as indirect evidence supporting the existence of privately held land. This is also corroborated by Nārada,[4] who writes that it would be highly iniquitous, if the king proceeded to interfere with the ownership and possession of houses and lands of his subjects, for it would result in utter chaos. Brihaspati,[5] while dealing with the law of inheritance, writes "Houses and landed property inherited from an ancestor shall be shared equally by the father and sons; but the sons cannot claim a share of their father's own property without the consent of the father." Some feudatories or high government officers might own even whole villages which they could donate as gifts. From the Amauna Plate of Māhārāja Nandana, dated in Samvat 232 (551-2 A.D.), we learn that Māhārāja Kumārāmātya Nandana granted the village Mallayashṭikā, to a Brāhmaṇa named Ravisvāmi.[6] All these go to show the existence of private ownership of land. Possession coupled with clear title appear to have been necessary for ownership. Title might have been legalised by the grant of a royal charter as is suggested by the copperplate grant of

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[1] *E.I.*, xxiii, p. 52.
[2] *ibid.*, xv, p. 131.
[3] Legge, p. 42.
[4] *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxiii, p. 164.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 370.
[6] *E.I.*, x, p. 49 ff.

Dharmāditya.[1] Bùt this does not prove the royal ownership of all land. Even now when there is private ownership of land, title is registered in Government office and the owner receives the necessary legal document. Right of sale and gift are essential features of ownership and we find these rights exercised by private persons during the period. We have just seen Kumārāmātya Nandana granting a whole village to a Brāhmaṇa Ravisvāmi. He could not be making a gift of the royal village but of a village of which he was the owner. It is, therefore, not correct to say that "there is no record of the donation of a whole village except by the King."[2]

In this connection, it is interesting to study the conditions attached to the donations and grants by the rulers. As mentioned before, the grants of land entitled the donee to the taxes which were previously paid by the tenants to the ruler. The inscriptions, specially those belonging to the Pāla period throw a good deal of light on the privileges enjoyed by those who received the gift of land. According to the inscriptions (such as Monghyr and Bhagalpur Copperplates), a gift of a village meant that all the things in the village like pasture-lands, trees and water-tanks went with it to the donee. Besides, the recipient of the gift of land automatically became exempted from all oppression by the royal troops and had no longer to pay taxes. He also became immune from the ten offences (Daśāparādha). Some of these gifts such as the one in the Amauna Copperplate were donated according to the maxim of uncultivable (Bhūmichchhidra) land meaning in practice permanent endowment to be enjoyed by the donee and his successor till the existence of the sun and the moon.[3] This immunity from taxes and the ten offences is also confirmed by the Khalimpur Copperplate of Dharmapāla.

That these gifts of land by the ruler or individuals were sometimes not without certain conditions is demonstrated by the inscriptions of the period. For example, the Gayā Copperplate of Samudra Gupta,[4] which records the grant of a village to a Brāhmaṇa, also mentions the condition attached to the grant, that the donee could not admit new tenants on the donated land for obtaining extra taxes. Besides, although the donee became the new owner as a result of the grant, he did not have the right of destroying the perpetuity of the grant by reselling this land or donating it to somebody else, according to the custom of 'Nīvi-dharma' or 'Apradā-dharma', mentioned in the Nandpur Copperplate and Damodarpur Copperplate Inscriptions.[5] The donee receiving the grant according to Nīvi-dharma had to maintain the endowment perpetually. The donee could only spend the interest for the specified purposes. In the Bihar Stone Inscription of Skanda Gupta the village field was granted as an Akshayanīvi, i.e., as permanent endowment.[6] It

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[1] I.A., 1910, p. 195.
[2] Maity, op. cit., p. 17.
[3] *E.I.*, x, pp. 49 ff.
[4] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 257.
[5] E.*I.*, xxiii, p. 55; xv, p. 114.
[6] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, No. 12, p. 47 ff.

is the same as Apradā-dharma according to which the donee had the right to perpetual enjoyment of the endowment but had no right to alienate or diminish it or destroy it.[1] Whether all holdings in the country were regulated by the law of 'Nīvi-dharma,' we have no means to ascertain; "the probability," according to Majumdar,[2] "is that it applied only to estates created for pious purposes." It is also not definitely known whether lands alienated by sale or gift under this form of tenure were rent-free, or "became liable" as Ghosal[3] suggests "to a progressive enhancement of the revenue till the normal rate was reached."

In view of the evidences cited above it is not easy to accept fully the view that the king was the owner of all land during the period under review, whatever else may have been the position in the earlier period. Contemporary lawgivers, Nārada and Brihaspati, also accept private ownership of land. We have seen that landed property could be sold or donated by individuals, besides the king. There appears to have been big land-owners and small land-owners. Some land-owners might have been lords of villages just as Kumārāmātya Nandana appears to have been.[4] The references to seeking king's sanction for the purchase of land occurring in the Nandpur (Monghyr district) and the Damodarpur Copperplates do not necessarily mean that king's permission was necessary for all secular transaction in land. These refer to particularly 'Khila' lands under the local authorities.

But the king as before was probably the biggest landowner. (Kauṭilya also appears to distinguish crown lands—Sīta—from lands under cultivators.) Land under the disposal of the king is mentioned by Fa-Hien, as stated above. He was lord of many villages, and could grant entire villages to the donees as we have seen. He also appears to be the owner of the 'Khila' or waste land as is suggested by the Nandpur Copperplate, according to which the permission of the local officials was sought to buy some fallow land belonging to the crown.[5] The king was owner of mines and forests. Nārada[6] assigns treasure-trove to the king.

The right of the king over taxes or to control the proper use of land was in the wake of his sovereign rights and it was to assure protection and development of the kingdom; it is not a definite proof of king's ownership of land.[7] Kane rightly observes that "the ownership of arable land was in the

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[1] Maity, *Economic Life of Northern India in Gupta Period*, pp. 25-30.

[2] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, vol. i, p. 646.

[3] Ghosal, *Agrarian System in Ancient India*, p. 41.

[4] *E.I.*, x, pp. 49 ff. Amauna (Gayā district) plate of Nandana, Samvat 232.

[5] *E.I.*, xxiii, p. 52.

[6] Nārada, vii. 6-7.

[7] Altekar has drawn our attention to a grant by king, Dhruvasena I of Valabhi who gave 360 *padavarahas* of land to a temple, in four places situated in the north-west and north-east of the village. (*State and Government in Ancient India*, p. 271). If the king was the absolute owner, he certainly would have liked to make the gift in a compact way.

cultivator himself and the king was only entitled to demand a certain share of the produce..... It may be conceded that land that was waste or not cultivated by anybody was deemed to belong to the king."[1]

As against this, Maity, speaking about the Gupta period, says that "the royal ownership of land was fully established."[2] But Basham, on whom he relies, states that "there were views about king's ownership of land; the ancient Indian opinion, on this question as on many others, differed."[3] In view of conflicting authorities on the problem, at the present state of our knowledge this appears to be the best conclusion.

To summarise, it seems quite likely that there were lands, both privately owned as well as those by the ruler. The land owned by the ruler was given away as gift or sold mostly for furthering religious cause. On the privately owned land, the ruler exercised his sovereign rights and controlled its disposal or sale. Besides, as a sovereign, the king received the taxes for running the government. However, whether in the case of royal grants or private grants, the donor only surrendered his own proprietary rights over the donated property to the donee and the tenants or cultivators were allowed to cultivate as before; the donee did not possess the right to do away with cultivators without due cause. They had only to pay their normal dues to the new owner. Donees receiving royal charters obtained the right to receive certain amount of royal revenue paid by the cultivators to the king, and also in some cases some royal dues as well.

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[1] Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. ii, pt. ii, p. 868.

[2] Maity, op. cit., p. 22.

[3] Basham, *The Wonder .that was India*, pp. 109-110.

CHAPTER IV

LITERATURE

LITERATURE is a mirror of life and the varied forms of literary activities prove the dynamic character of the thought and life of the people. There was pronounced development in the field of literature during the period under review. The progress of Hinduism under the Imperial Guptas was accompanied with an increased use of Sanskrit. Sanskrit had gained great popularity during the Gupta and the Pāla periods as is evident from the inscriptions which are written in Sanskrit. Even the legends on coins of the Gupta rulers are in elegant verses. Buddhists also had already adopted Sanskrit as the medium of their sacred books. The period throughout marks the unprecedented development of classical Sanskrit. It is no doubt true that common people might have used popular dialects, and we find the Siddhas preaching in Apabhraṁśa or simply Bhāshā, born of the Sanskrit-Pāli-Prākrit hybrid composition.[1]

It has already been discussed in Chapter II that the period witnessed the progress of two popular religions. Literature was one of the most potent vehicles through which the exponents of each faith propagated their religion and philosophy among the masses. Secular literature was also none the less voluminous and inspiring. In fact, this period produced many of the best authors in several branches of secular literature such as Poetry and and Drama, Grammar, Lexicography and even Sciences like Astronomy, Mathematics, Chemistry and Medicine.

Literature flourished under the patronage of the king and his courtiers. Many of the Gupta Emperors were literary men themselves. For example, in the Allahabad Praśasti,[2] it has been stated that Samudra Gupta was a poet himself, although no work of his appears to have survived him. One of his titles was, "One who established (his) title of the king of poets by various poetical compositions that were fit to be the means of subsistence for learned people." Vikramāditya Chandra Gupta II is said to have had nine gems in his court, Kālidāsa being perhaps the most celebrated among them.[3] The Pāla rulers had their courts graced by the presence of many scholars of learning.

For a critical study of the literature of this period, it may conveniently be divided into two groups :—

(i) Brāhmaṇical literature, and
(ii) Buddhist literature.

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[1] Sankrityāyana, *Dohākoṣha*, p. 7.
[2] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, vol. iii, p. 15.
[3] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 15.

BRĀHMANICAL LITERATURE

The Purāṇas are considered to be one of the earliest Brāhmaṇical sectarian literature. It is difficult to define the Purāṇas or give an exact idea of their contents. They are a storehouse of traditions, legends, myths, dogmas, rituals, moral codes and religious and philosophical principles. In fact, in the words of Winternitz,[1] "they offer us greater insight into all aspects and phases of Hinduism—its mythology, its idol-worship, its theism and pantheism, its lore of Gods, its philosophy and its superstitions, its festivals and ceremonies and its ethics, more than any other work." According to well-established traditions the Purāṇas are eighteen in number,[2] but we actually find a large number of texts in addition to the Upa-purāṇas and supplementary works. They were, according to Pargiter,[3] originally written in Magadha. He writes, "Such accounts were composed in or near Magadha more particularly, which was one of the chief centres of political life and thought in those times and was famous for its bards and minstrels." The Purāṇas were re-edited during the Gupta period—perhaps by the fourth century A.D.—according to Pargiter.[4] The principal object of the re-edition of the Purāṇas in this period was to introduce the sectarian doctrines which had come into prominence with the rise of the Gupta power in Bihar. As the Imperial Guptas were Vaishṇavas, extensive chapters on Hindu rites and customs were added into the Purāṇas under their patronage. Perhaps, it was done by the Gupta rulers with a view to popularise the theistic religions like Vaishṇavism and Śaivism as opposed to Buddhism and other heretical sects.

The period also witnessed a development in the Dharmaśāstra literature. Nārada, Vyāsa, Devala, Brihaspati, Kātyāyana are assigned to this period. However, there is no information about their homes and about the actual authors who wrote their treatise on the names of their ancient sacred teachers. Therefore, we have no clear knowledge about any writer of Bihar who might have contributed to the Dharmaśāstra literature during this period.

The Nītisāra of Kāmandaka may be taken as Bihar's contribution to the literature on Polity, if identification of Kāmandaka with Śikharasvāmin (proposed by Jayaswal), the minister of Chandra Gupta II (as mentioned in the Karmadaṇḍā Inscription), is considered correct.[5]

The period not only produced valuable literature on Dharma and Artha, but it also witnessed a marked development of literature on the science of love and sexology, i.e., Kāma, the third aspect or aim of human life. On this subject Mallanāga Vātsyāyana is credited to have written a book whose

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[1] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, p. 529.

[2] They are following: Brahma, Padma, Vishṇu, Śiva or Vāyu, Bhāgavata, Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, Agni, Bhavishya, Brahma-Vaivarta, Liṅga, Skanda, Vāmana, Kūrma, Matsya, Garuḍa and Brahmāṇḍa.

[3] Pargiter, *The Purāṇa Text of the Dynastic History of Kali Age*, p. xxvii.

[4] *ibid.*, pp. xvi-xvii.

[5] J.B.O.R.S., xviii, p. 39. But the identification is not universally accepted.

date is assigned to the fourth century A.D.[1] According to Sastri,[2] he belonged to Pāṭaliputra and wrote his treatise there. It has been clearly pointed out in Mallanāga Vātsyāyana's book that it makes no claim to be the first work on the subject. He has merely reduced Babhravya's work to a reasonable size. This subject is again exhaustively dealt with by the Tāntric Buddhist writers of the Pāla period. In some of these books,[3] to quote Altekar,[4] "the students of the Kāmaśāstra and Psychology of sex will find ample material for study, as in the Bhikshuṇīprakīrṇaka and Śramanerṭīkā."

The philosophical works of the period are many and varied in character. They are almost invariably associated with religion and thus we have the works of Hindu as well as Buddhist philosophy. The philosophical ideals of the Hindus took their root from the hymns of the later Rigvedic literature and developed in the Upanishads and finally grew into six systems of philosophy, namely—Vaiśeshikā, Nyāya, Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Pūrva-mimāṁsā and Uttara-mimāṁsā or Vedānta. In this period a large number of philosophical works were written on some of the above mentioned systems, in which the contribution of Bihar is no less important. Most important writers of this State were Vātsyāyana, Maṇḍana Miśra and Vāchaspati Miśra.

According to Sastri,[5] Vātsyāyana's ancestors lived in Magadha. His real name was Pakshilasvāmi Vātsyāyana. He wrote a commentary, known as Vātsyāyana-Bhāshya, on the Nyāyasūtra of Akshapāda or Gautama, the early exposition on Nyāya. He is said to have lived in the middle of the fourth century A.D.[6]

Āchārya Maṇḍana Miśra was a great Mimāṁsaka. Mādhava in his Śaṅkara-Digvijaya[7] has pointed out Mahishmatī as his native land. This place has been identified with a village, Mahisi, in Saharsa District and is popularly known as the Maṇḍanadhāma. A short distance away stands a temple dedicated to Tārā, according to local traditions built by Maṇḍana Miśra himself. (Some identify Mahishmatī with the ruins of an ancient city in Narbada valley.) Maṇḍana Miśra was one of the disciples of Kumārila[8] and was one of the elder contemporaries of Śaṅkara whose date is assigned to 788 to 820 A.D.[9] and thus Maṇḍana Miśra's date may fall in 800

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[1] Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 469.
[2] Sastri, *Magadhan Literature*, p. 76.
[3] The books are as such: Bhikshuṇīprakīrṇaka and Śramanerṭīkā, available in Tibetan translation. Recently they have been deciphered under the auspices of the K.P.J.R.I., Patna.
[4] A.B.O.R.I., xxxv, p. 61.
[5] Sastri, *Magadhan Literature*, pp. 73, 97.
[6] Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 483.
[7] *Śaṅkara-Digvijaya*, viii, i.
[8] Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 474; J.O.R., Madras, vol. i.
[9] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. ii, pp. 418, 429; It is said Śaṅkarāchārya went to Mahishmatī to secure the cooperation of Maṇḍana Miśra in his task of reviving Brāhmaṇic thought against the onslaught of Buddhists. But Śaṅkara found it difficult to win over Maṇḍana to his views. In the prolonged philosophical discourses that took place between the two

A.D.[1] General tradition has always identified Maṇḍana Miśra with Sureśvara and Viśvarūpa.[2] However, according to Dasgupta[3] they were different persons, though Viśvarūpa and Sureśvara may be the same. Maṇḍana Miśra's most important work is 'Brahma-Siddhi,' which is in both verse and prose. Many important works refer to Brahma-Siddhi as written by Maṇḍana Miśra and it was commented on by many writers[4] in later years. Among them Vāchaspati Miśra's Tattva-Samīksha[5] is an important one. Maṇḍana Miśra's other works are Bhāvanā-viveka, Vidhi-viveka, Vibhrama-viveka and Sphoṭa-siddhi. The Vidhi-viveka was commented upon by Vāchaspati Miśra in his Nyāya-kārikā, and the Sphoṭa-siddhi was commented upon by the son of Bhavadāsa (who had also written a commentary called Tattva-vibhāvanā, on Vāchaspati Miśra's Tattva-bindu[6]). Thus Maṇḍana Miśra's contribution was mostly on Yoga.

Vāchaspati Miśra lived in Mithilā[7] in about the middle of the ninth century A.D. He is famous as a great commentator of his period. He is the celebrated author of a commentary called Bhāmati on Śaṅkara's Bhāshya.[8] He is also said to have written Tattva-samīksha, a commentary on Maṇḍana's Brahma-siddhi.[9] He also commented on the Sāṁkhya-kārikā, Vidhi-viveka, Nyāya-vārttikā and was the author of a number of other works.[10] In his Nyāya-sūchinibandha he gives his date as 898, which in all probability has to be understood as of the Vikrama Samvat and consequently he may be placed in 841 A.D.[11] Bhāmati was his last great work, for in the colophon he mentions that he had already written his Nyāya-kārikā, Tattva-samīkshā, Tattva-bindu and other works, on Nyāya, Sāṁkhya and Yoga.[12] Thus Vāchaspati Miśra contributed to almost all the main branches of Hindu Philosophy.[13]

Now we may examine how far the religious and philosophical literature

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greatest minds of the time, Bhāratī Devī sat as judge and ultimately awarded victory to Śaṅkarāchārya.

[1] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. ii, p. 87.

[2] The tradition probably started from Vidyāraṇya's Śaṅkaradigvijaya where Maṇḍana is spoken of as being named not only Umbeka, but also Viśvarūpa (viii. 63). He further says that in x. 4 of the same work, when Maṇḍana became a follower of Śaṅkara, he received from him the name Sureśvara.

[3] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. ii, pp. 86-7.

[4] For details, *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 83-84.

[5] *ibid.*

[6] *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 87, footnote 2.

[7] H.O.S., vol. xvii, Intro., pp. xxi-xxii.

[8] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. ii, p. 106.

[9] *ibid.*

[10] *ibid.*, pp. 107-08.

[11] H.O.S., vol. xvii, Intro. p. xxiii.

[12] *ibid.*, p. xxi.

[13] The Mithilā Nyāyakāras in their works tried to controvert the Buddhist philosophical works and this intellectual contest was carried on with great heat between Nālandā and Mithilā for a century. It was in an attempt to controvert the Buddhist Philosophy developed at Nālandā that Navya-nyāya, the contribution of Mithilā to philosophical literature, developed.

mentioned above was supplemented by secular literature such as Kāvya or poetical works, drama, prose, romance and fables, grammar, lexicography and sciences like medicine, chemistry, astronomy and mathematics.

Kālidāsa stands foremost amongst the writers of secular literature of the period. He is taken to be the most brilliant luminary in the literary firmament of the Gupta age who had shed lustre on the whole of Sanskrit literature. He is regarded as the greatest poet and dramatist that ever lived in India. His works are marked with high reputation and popularity throughout the ages. It is curious that nothing is known with certainty regarding his home and the period in which he floursihed. His works are all that we know definitely about him. There is a keen controversy regarding the date of Kālidāsa. Scholars like Bhandarkar, Smith, Keith, Max-Müller, and a host of others have placed Kālidāsa in the fourth or fifth century A.D., but in recent years this date has been challenged and some of the historians have placed Kālidāsa in the first century B.C. One of the greatest supporters of the latter theory is Pandey,[1] who, while arguing that Kālidāsa was a court poet of Vikramāditya, has tried to establish that this Vikramāditya belonged to the first century B.C. and is quite different from Vikramāditya Chandra Gupta II. He has based his theory on literary evidences and traditions and with his scholastic argument has tried to prove that the mere absence of epigraphic evidence can be no sound argument for placing Vikramāditya in the fifth century A.D. He has discussed his theory in very great detail in his book 'Vikramāditya' where he has tried to prove the existence of historical Vikramāditya in the first century B.C. and has consequently inferred that Kālidāsa, therefore, also belongs to this period.

Pandey has laid very great stress on literary evidences and traditions, but we are inclined to believe that archæological evidences play no less an important role. Even though it is true that pre-Aśokan history is mostly derived from literary evidences, the authenticity of many of them is questionable. In this connection, it may be pointed out that Pandey has based his work mostly on the literature of the tenth century A.D. It is difficult to ascertain how far these later works correctly depict the tradition of the first century B.C. Pandey has also suggested that Vikramāditya who defeated the Śakas belonged to the first century B.C. and the Vikrama-era was started by him. It may be pointed out that the Purāṇas give a list of kings who ruled in Mālava in the first century B.C., but are silent on the existence of Vikrama there. If he had defeated the Śakas and founded an era, the Purāṇas should have taken pride in describing his achievement, but they are quite silent on this point. The Vikrama-era is first known by this name in 841 A.D.[2] No earlier records describe this era as Vikrama-era. In the third and fourth century A.D., it was called Krita-era. In the next two centuries it became gradually known as Mālava-era. Afterwards for the next three

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[1] Pandey, *Vikramāditya.*

[2] *E.I.*, xix, Appendix, p. 6; It is for the first time in 898 that Vikrama era is used in an inscription from Dholəpur (Rajputana).

centuries it was simply called Samvata. In the ninth century A.D. it came to be known as Vikrama-era. But even then it did not become very popular. This name probably was given because Vikramāditya Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta dynasty was then a very popular figure in the contemporary folklore.

Without entering into details of the controversies about the date of Kālidāsa, who existed in Vikramāditya's court, we hold the view that Kālidāsa did exist in the fifth century A.D. This theory of ours is mostly based on epigraphic and numismatic evidences. It has been found that descriptions of dresses and ornaments described by Kālidāsa have been faithfully depicted on the coins and images of this period found in this State. References to Vikramāditya are found in the archæological finds such as coins and epigraphs from the fifth century onwards. In view of this we are disposed to agree with scholars like Bhandarkar, Smith, Keith, Max Müller, etc. who have placed Kālidāsa in the fifth or sixth century A.D. The first mention of Kālidāsa is in Aihole Inscription found in the Deccan and belonging to the seventh century A.D.

The detailed descriptions of some of the important places of Bihar in different works of Kālidāsa naturally indicate that this poet was very thoroughly acquainted with the State. He has described some of the important places as well as rivers of Bihar. For example, he mentions Magadha, Aṅga, Mithilā, and the names of some of the important rivers like the Ganges, the Soṇe, the Kośī, and the confluence of the Ganges and the Soṇe in Bihar. Magadha[1] figures prominently in Raghuvaṁśa. Similarly Aṅga[2] has been mentioned conventionally and was conterminous with Magadha. The next important place mentioned by him is Mithilā or Videha.[3]

Gaṅgā is frequently mentioned by Kālidāsa at many places, and in references to it he has also mentioned the confluence of the two rivers, the Ganges and the Soṇe. For instance, at one place he refers to the wildness of the river Ganges and describes how the Soṇe succeeds in checking the Ganges during the rains.[4] Even the Kośī, one of the oldest rivers of Northern India and specially of Bihar, was well known to Kālidāsa. He refers to the Mahākośīprapāta.[5] Thus we find that Kālidāsa was well acquainted with the State.

Ritusaṁhāra, Mālavikāgnimitra, Kumārasaṁbhava, Meghadūta, Śākuntala and Raghuvaṁśa are the immortal works of Kālidāsa. Vikramorvaśīya is another drama which is a fairy tale of the love of the celestial nymph Urvaśī and mortal king Puru. Śākuntala ranks high amongst the great works, in the literature of the world. His genius is also shown in his poetry. His two poetical works, Raghuvaṁśa and Kumārasambhava, and the lyrical poem Meghadūta, are universally regarded as gems of Sanskrit poetry. His style is characterised by grace, simplicity and sentiment. Thus Kālidāsa is universally

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[1] *Raghu.*, vi. 21-24, pp. 57-58.
[2] *ibid.*, vi. 27-30, pp. 58-59.
[3] *ibid.*, xi. 32-36, 52, pp. 117, 120.
[4] *ibid.*, vii. 36 and ii. 26, pp. 73 and 16.
[5] *Kum.*, vi. 33, p. 250.

regarded as the greatest writer of secular Sanskrit literature. Besides him, the period witnessed a large number of poets and dramatists, and some of them were not unworthy successors to him. Of course, many of them did not belong to the State, barring a few like Hariseṇa, Vīraseṇa (Śābā), Vatsabhaṭṭa, Viśākhadatta and Subandhu, who were certainly closely associated with Bihar.

The name of Hariseṇa, Vīraseṇa and Vatsabhaṭṭa are known to us through the epigraphic records of the Gupta rulers. The foremost among them is undoubtedly Hariseṇa[1] who was a General and Foreign Minister under Samudra Gupta. His panegyric (Praśasti) of Samudra Gupta inscribed on a pillar at Allahabad is a poem of great merit.

Vīraseṇa,[2] also known as Śābā, is known to us through an inscription from Udayagiri caves in Bhopal State. He is said to have "known the meaning of words and logic and the ways of mankind." He was a native of Pāṭaliputra, belonged to the Kautsa Gotra, and was a devotee of God Śambhu. He was a poet but unfortunately no work of his has survived.

The Praśasti of the Mandasor Inscription is said to have been composed with particular care by Vatsabhaṭṭa[3] who was an officer in the court of Kumāra Gupta I. These inscriptions alone would suffice to prove abundantly the existence of a developed poetry (Kāvya) and prose during the period of the Gupta rule. Besides the above mentioned writers of prose and poetry, the names of Vijjikā, Viśākhadatta and Subandhu are handed down to us through their literary works.

Vijjikā was a dramatist and she is known by her book 'Kaumudīmahotsava' which, according to Jayaswal,[4] describes the political situation of Magadha at the advent of the Gupta supremacy. He called her Kiśorikā and assigned her date to the time of Samudra Gupta,[5] and stated that the book must have been written about 340 A.D.[6] But the style of the play indicates that the writer of this play has borrowed not merely the ideas, but also the language and the metre of the verses of Kālidāsa.[7] Thus according to Mankad, on the evidence of style, the book may be dated much later than the time of Samudra Gupta, and the theme may be regarded as romantic and imaginative rather than historical. Vijjikā probably belonged to South India.[8]

Viśākhadatta is another noted playwright of the period. The plays

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[1] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, vol. iii, pp. 12-13.

[2] *ibid.*, p. 35.

[3] *ibid.*, p. 88.

[4] Kavi calls her Vijjikā whereas Jayaswal named her Kiśorikā. See *Kaumudīmahotsava*, Dakṣiṇāvarta Sanskrit Series No. 4, p. 1; A.B.O.R.I., xii, p. 51.

[5] A.B.O.R.I., xii, p. 50 (footnote 1).

[6] Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 95.

[7] Mankad, A.B.O.R.I., xvi, pp. 155-57; I.H.Q., 1934, pp. 765-66, Sarma is of the same opinion, but he is unable to decide offhand the priority or posterity of these two writers, Kālidāsa and Vijjikā.

[8] *Kaumudīmahotsava*, intro.

'Mudrārākshasa,' 'Abhisārikāvamchitaka' and 'Devī-Chandraguptam' are attributed to him. There is a controversy among the scholars regarding his date. Some place him in the fifth century A.D. and regard him as a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II,[1] while others basing their conclusions on the mention of Avantivarman in his work, assign to him seventh or ninth century A.D.[2] But De[3] writes, "From the critical study of Hillebrandt's edition, however, it appears that the variant Avantivarman is most probably a later emendation and if this is so the theories based upon name lose much of their force." Thus according to De,[4] Viśākhadatta belonged to the older group of dramatists who succeeded Kālidāsa, either as his younger contemporary or at some period anterior to the ninth century A.D. In either case, his date falls in the period of review. His play, Mudrārākshasa,[5] dramatises the revolution which placed Chandragupta Maurya on the throne of Magadha. Devī-Chandraguptam describes how prince Chandra Gupta killed the Śaka king in the guise of his sister-in-law and eventually ascended the Gupta throne. Court history of Magadha is the subject-matter of the work.

Subandhu's 'Vāsavadattā' is a famous work in the field of fables and romantic literature. It is a story of love and romance which centres round a royal princess of Pāṭaliputra. Keith[6] has assigned its date to the second quarter of the seventh century A.D. and has pointed out that he was a contemporary of Bāṇa. His name first appears in Bāṇa's 'Harshacharita.' But quite a late tradition makes Subandhu a contemporary of the legendary Vikramāditya and the nephew of Vararuchi. However, Keith's conclusion[7] that he was a contemporary of Bāṇa seems to be more correct.

In the field of Lexicography, Amarasiṁha's Nāmalingānuśāsana also called the Amarakośa is one of the earliest texts on it. According to Keith,[8] Amarasiṁha is also known as a poet and was certainly a Buddhist who knew the Mahāyāna, and used Kālidāsa. His lower limit of date is dubious; he is not certainly known to the Nyāsa of Jinendrabuddhi (700 A.D.), but the decline of Buddhism in India renders it improbable that he lived after the eighth

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[1] Jayaswal (I.A., xlii, pp. 265-67) and Hillebrandt (J.R.A.S., 1923, p. 586) took him to be a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II.

[2] I.A., li (1922), pp. 49-51. This Avantivarman is sometimes identified with the Maukhari king Avantivarman, who flourished in the seventh century A.D., and married his son Grahvarman to Harshavardhana's sister Rājyaśrī and sometimes with Avantivarman, king of Kashmir, who reigned in the middle of the ninth century, A.D. (Keith, J.R.A.S., 1909, p. 145); Charpentier has taken Viśākhadatta to be a contemporary of Skanda Gupta who had defeated the Śakas (J.R.A.S., 1923, p. 590).

[3] B.C. Law Vol. I, pp. 50-51.

[4] *ibid.*

[5] Jayaswal has pointed out that the Chandra Gupta of *Mudrārākshasa* is Chandra Gupta Vikramāditya of Gupta dynasty, I.A., xlii, p. 266.

[6] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 308.

[7] *ibid.*, pp. 307-08.

[8] *ibid.*, p. 413.

century; his ascription to the fifth century, however, rests on nothing better than the tradition that he was a jewel of Vikramāditya's court.

Absence of any literature on grammar by Hindu writers during this period, has been compensated by the Buddhist Grammarian Chandragomin,[1] who was not only a grammarian but a philosopher and a poet as well. He composed a commentary known as 'Chandra-Vyākaraṇa' on Pāṇini's Ashṭadhyāyī. He was a scholar of the Nālandā University.[2]

We have no information about books on medicine written in this period. The accounts of Fa-Hien,[3] supported by archæological evidence[4] give us an idea of well-organised and well-managed hospitals at Pāṭaliputra. Buddhist educational institutions like Nālandā were taking interest in the study of Medicine,[5] for it was realized that physical healing was as important as spiritual healing. Sastri[6] has referred to one Vātsyāyana as a physician, who belonged to this period and was the offspring of the Vātsyāyana family of Magadha.

In the field of Mathematics and Astronomy, Bihar found a Newton in Āryabhaṭṭa,[7] who is called the father of scientific Astronomy and Mathematics of the Hindus. He was born at Pāṭaliputra in ca. 476 A.D. and wrote his works in about 499 A.D.[8] He wrote a number of works on Astronomy which are known only through quotations from his writings given by Brahmagupta and other subsequent astronomers. It is, in general, through these citations that Āryabhaṭṭa was known to be an eminent astronomer anterior to Brahmagupta in the beginning of the sixth century A.D. From the quotations by Brahmagupta we learn that Āryabhaṭṭa believed in the diurnal motion of the earth round its axis. "The starry sphere," he affirms, "is stationary, and the earth making a revolution produces the daily rising and setting of stars and planets."[9] He found out Sine functions and utilised them in Astronomy.[10] As pointed out by Kaye,[11] Āryabhaṭṭa appears to have kept in touch with Greek Astronomy, which influenced his works. But this view of Kaye has been sharply criticised by Das,[12] who has held that Kaye's interpretation of the passage is faulty. Āryabhaṭṭa's Daśagītikā consists of ten verses in the Gītikā metre which is a modification of the Āryā. His other work, the Ārya-Siddhāntikā, consists of 108 verses and is divided into three sections,

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[1] Infra, p. 174.
[2] Legge, p. 79.
[3] *ibid.*
[4] A.B.O.R.I., xxx, p. 57.
[5] Supra, p. 43.
[6] Sastri, *Magadhan Literature*, pp. 121-22.
[7] There were two Āryabhaṭṭas, one the great astronomer who lived in the fifth century A.D. and the other, a mere commentator and compiler, flourished in the 13th or 14th century A.D. The latter wrote a commentary on Sūrya-siddhānta. J.A.S.B. (N.S.), iv, p. 113.
[8] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 521.
[9] I.H.Q., iv, p. 71; *Āryabhaṭīyam*, iv, 9.
[10] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 521.
[11] J.A.S.B., 1908, p. 115; I.H.Q., iv, p. 68.
[12] I.H.Q., iv, pp. 72-73.

Kālakriyāpada, Gòlapada and Gaṇitapada. In these works, the extent of which does not jointly go beyond 118 verses, Āryabhaṭṭa has explained the whole system of Hindu Astronomy.[1]

Āryabhaṭṭa was the first to use Mathematics in the study of Astronomy.[2] Āryabhaṭiyam[3] is his famous work. Problems of Mathematics are only incidentally dealt with in this important work. Besides dealing with the rules of involution and evolution, it deals with the Arithmetical progression, both of numbers and of their squares and cubes. In the realm of Geometry, the work describes several properties of the circle, discusses questions connected with projective geometry and gives a value for π, far more accurate than any suggested till then. In Algebra, simultaneous equations with four unknown quantities have been solved, and the problem of finding a general solution of the interminates of the first degree is successfully tackled. That Trignometry was also being developed at this time becomes clear from the use of the Sine functions made for solving the problems of Astronomy. Āryabhaṭṭa had many students and his next successor, Lalla, was one of his pupils. Varāhamihira too was his pupil,[4] who, according to Bhaṭṭotpala, a late commentator, was a Magadha-dvija.[5]

Varāhamihira's most valuable work is Pañcha-Siddhāntikā. This book gives a summary of all the Siddhāntas current in his time. They were five in number such as Paulisa, Romaka, Vāsishṭha, Paitāmaha and Sūrya-Siddhānta. He himself mentions that of these five Siddhāntas, Paulisa and Romaka had been already explained by Lādadeva.[6] The 'Gaṇaka-taraṅgiṇī' has given a list of Varāha's works and among them the 'Brihat Saṁhitā' is his best. It is encyclopædic in nature. It treats not only of Astronomy and Astrology but such subjects as Gardening, Agriculture, Architecture, Sculpture, Strī-lakshaṇa, Purushalakshaṇa, the science of Meteorology, Chemistry, Metallurgy, etc. It is a great pity that Varāhamihira could not succeed in founding a school of his own to continue a systematic study of these different branches of science.

BUDDHIST LITERATURE

The Buddhist literature of this period is mostly concerned with the

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[1] Sastri, *Magadhan Literature*, p. 126.
[2] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 523.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 521; J.A.S.B., 1908, p. 111.
[4] Dvivedi, *Gaṇaka-taraṅgiṇī*, p. 12.
[5] Dvivedi, *Bhaṭṭotpala's Commentary on Brihat Saṁhitā*, p. 2; Some say that Varāhamihira was a Magadvija, i.e., one of the Magii long settled in India. From all this the late Pandit Sudhakara Dvivedi in his *Gaṇaka-taraṅgiṇī* infers (p. 12) that it is not impossible that Varāha was a Magadha Brāhmaṇa. He might have gone to Ujjain for livelihood. He studied with his father in his own house in Magadha, and also studied the works of Āryabhaṭṭa there. He travelled to make himself known, worshipped Sun-God at Kampillaka (Kalpi) and obtained a book from Him. However, Magadhan origin of Varāhamihira is very doubtful and uncertain in view of the evidences available so far.
[6] Sastri, *Magadhan Literature*, p. 129.

development of Logic. The main aim of Buddhist writers of the period was to establish and propagate their religious views and ideas. They contributed very little to secular literature in comparison with the Hindus. They mostly criticised the prevailing system of Hindu Philosophy in order to establish the superiority of their own. For example, the commentary by Vātsyāyana on Nyāya-philosophy of Gautama called 'Vātsyāyana-bhāshya' has been sharply criticised by Buddhist Dinnāga. Udyotakara[1] answered these criticisms in his commentary known as 'Bhāshyavārttikā' and criticised Dinnāga. Dinnāga was subsequently defended in the famous work 'Pramāṇavārittkā' by Dharmakīrtī, a pupil of Dinnāga.[2]

Thus, instead of producing a succession of independent thinkers having their own system to propound and establish, the Buddhists brought forth schools of pupils who mostly carried the traditional views of the particular system from generation to generation. They explained them, expounded them and defended them against the attacks by other rival schools which they constantly attacked in order to establish the superiority of the system they adhered to. These Buddhist writers and thinkers did not give anything original to the literary world; they merely went on interpreting the traditional views of the early writers. It was the prevailing Hindu philosophy (at the start of the Christian era) that aroused the Buddhist monks of the later period to refute it. In the period under review the Mahāyāna Buddhism had already taken its full shape. It was this school of Buddhism which produced a large volume of literature on Buddhism. The circumstances also favoured them. They had the facilities for writing and the help of splendid and rich libraries of the Nālandā and the Vikramaśilā Universities. Besides these, some Siddhas from Bihar during the Pāla period had written a large number of Dohās in their own vernacular which were meant for popularising Buddhism among the general masses who were mostly not well-versed in Sanskrit.

Philosophy was not very much favoured in the early Buddhism because of the fact that the Buddha was more a moral and spiritual teacher than a scholastic philosopher. He believed that the ultimate problem of philosophy and metaphysics could not be solved by discussion and pronounced them to be inexplicable. He was stern even against the tendency to discuss them.

It was in the time of Nāgārjuna that the term Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna gained currency in India and thus he is credited to be the founder of the Mādhyamikā school in Buddhism. It was so called because it avoided both the extremes, i.e., advocated neither the theory of absolute reality nor that of total unreality of the world; but chose a middle path[3] inculcating that the world had only a conditional existence. According to Vidyabhusana,[4] Nāgārjuna's

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[1] The life and home of this writer is, as far as our knowledge goes, unknown.

[2] Ed. by Sankrityāyana, *Pramāṇavārttikā-bhāshyam of Prajñākaragupta*, published by the K.P.J.R.I., Patna, 1953, Introduction, p. vii.

[3] J.B.T.S., 1897, pt. iv, pp. 7-20.

[4] Vidyabhusana, *Mediæval School of Indian Logic*, p. 70.

latest date is assigned to 401 A.D. But according to Tāranātha,[1] he was one of the early patrons of the University of Nālandā which came into existence after 400 A.D. There are some who believe that he flourished towards the end of the second century A.D.[2]

Āryadeva, a follower of Nāgārjuna, was the next writer on the Mādhyamikā philosophy. Though born in South India, he resided for a long time in Nālandā, where he was a Paṇḍita.[3] He was a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II and the lowest limit of his date is 401 A.D.[4], when his biography was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva. He discussed Sāṁkhya, Vaiśeshika and twenty other heretical schools in a work called 'the explanation of Nirvāṇa by heretical and Hīnayāna schools, mentioned in the Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra.[5] His another work 'Śataśāstra' has been published by Tucci.[6] In addition to the above mentioned books, he wrote the following[7] on the Mādhyamikā Philosophy, such as Śataka-śāstra, Brahmapramathana-yukti-hetu-siddhi, etc. all of which bear evidence to his knowledge of Logic.

This period also witnessed a large volume of literature on Vijñānavāda or Yogāchāra philosophy. It is not definitely known who the founder of the Yogāchāra school was. In the Tibetan and the Chinese books, the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra, Mahāsamaya-sūtra, Bodhisattvacharya-nirdeśa and the Saptadaśabhūmi-śāstra-yogāchāra have been named as the prominent old works on the Yogāchāra system.[8] Among the later writers the greatest of the Vijñānavāda school was Asaṅga[9] who was at first an adherent of Hīnayāna. Later on, he adopted Yogāchāra philosophy of Mahāyāna and is said to have lived for some time at Nālandā as a Paṇḍita. His date is assigned to about 450 A.D.[10] To him are attributed the following books[11] :—Saptadaśabhūmi-sūtra, Mahāyāna-sūtra-upadeśa, Mahāyāna-samparigraha-śāstra etc.

Another writer on Yogāchāra philosophy was Vasubandhu, a younger brother of Asaṅga. Formerly he was a liberal Sarvāstivādin, but was converted to Vijñānavāda late in his life by Asaṅga.[12] He wrote in his early life the great standard work of the Sarvāstivāda.[13] He is said to have commented upon a number of Mahāyāna-sūtras, such as Avataṁsaka, Nirvāṇa, Saddharma-puṇḍarīka, Prajñāpāramitā, Vimalakīrti and Śrīmālāsimhanāda, and compiled some Mahāyāna-sūtras, such as Vijñāna-mātra-siddhi, Ratnatraya and

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[1] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 69.
[2] Altekar, *The Vākātaka and Gupta Age*, p. 384.
[3] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 71.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 18.
[6] *ibid.*
[7] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 71.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 72.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 74.
[10] *ibid.*
[11] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 19.
[12] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 75.
[13] J.R.A.S., 1905, Takakusu, *A Study of Paramārtha's life of Vasubandhu.*

Mahāyānasamparigrahavyākhyā.[1] The school of Vijñānavāda continued for at least a century or two after Vasubandhu, but we are not in possession of any work of great fame of this school after him. His Abhidharma-kośa, represented his views on Mahāyāna. Sugiura[2] has ascertained from Chinese sources that in the seventh century A.D. while Hiuen-Tsiang was in India, he saw three other works on Logic attributed to Vasubandhu, which are called in Chinese Ronki, Ronshiki and Ronshin, respectively. Hiuen-Tsiang had translated his few books into Chinese, which are as follows: Vijñāna-mātra-siddhi, Madhyānta-vibhaṅga and Viṁśikā-prakaraṇa.[3] According to Takakusu,[4] Vasubandhu flourished in the period 420 to 500 A.D. This fact further gets support by the statement of Tāranātha, who tells us that both Asaṅga and Vasubandhu were great Paṇḍitas of Nālandā.[5] Thus their dates coincide with the date of the rise of the Nālandā University which came into existence after 400 A.D. as Nālandā was a mere village when the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien, came to visit India.

Another great Paṇḍita of Yogāchāra at Nālandā was Āchārya Dinnāga. He restored Nālandā University's fame when it was on the point of being humiliated by the Brāhmaṇa Sudurjaya.[6] In the controversy with the latter, Dinnāga defeated him thrice in a debate and afterwards he began to preach the Abhiddhama. He composed many dialectical Śāstras and in all a hundred of them. Pramāṇa-sammuchchaya[7] is one of the greatest literary works of Dinnāga. The Pramāṇa-sammuchchaya-vritti is a commentary on the Pramāṇa-sammuchchaya by Dinnāga himself. Nyāya-praveśa or Nyāya-praveśonāma-pramāṇa-prakaraṇa is another excellent work on Logic by him. Next comes his small treatise on Logic entitled Hetu-Chakrahamaru, Pramāṇaśāstra-praveśa, Ālambaṇa-parīkshā and a commentary on the Ālambana-parīkshā named Ālambana-parīkshā-vritti and Trikālaparīkshā are also attributed to him.[8] He belonged to South India from where he was called to Nālandā to combat the Hindu dialectics and later on became the Head of the Nālandā Monastery. There is a difference of opinion as to when he lived. According to Keith[9] he lived in about 400 A.D. although Keith's conclusion is questionable in view of the fact that Dinnāga came after Vasubandhu. Since Vasubandhu has been placed from 420 to 500

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[1] J.R.A.S., 1905, Takakusu, *A Study of Paramārtha's life of Vasubandhu*; Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. ii, p. 128.

[2] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 76.

[3] Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 143.

[4] J.R.A.S., 1905, p. 47. Scholars are divided on Vasubandhu's date. Bhattacharyya (*Tattvasaṅgraha*, G.O.S. xxx, p. lxvi) prefers to place him in 280-360 A.D., whereas Winternitz (I.H.Q., 1933 March, p. 5) seems to be inclined to place him in 320-400 A.D.

[5] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, pp. 103-04.

[6] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 558.

[7] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 82.

[8] *ibid.*, pp. 100-01.

[9] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 484.

A.D. the most probable period of Dinnāga appears to be between 500 to 600 A.D.

According to Tāranātha,[1] Dinnāga was succeeded by Jayadeva and Chandrakīrti but their names are not mentioned either, by Hiuen-Tsiang or I-Tsing even though they have given a list of names of the famous Paṇḍitas of Nālandā. Tāranātha writes about Chandrakīrti that he was a great master of masters, and composed commentaries upon Mādhyamikāmūla, Mādhyamikāvachāra and upon the First Principle.[2] Perhaps, the interregnum marked in Tāranātha's history was filled up by Hiuen-Tsiang's mentioning the name of Guṇamati and Sthiramati.[3] Sthiramati has been described by Hiuen-Tsiang[4] as the founder of a monastery at Valabhi. Tāranātha mentions a treatise called Abhidharmakośabhāshyaṭīkā-tattva which he ascribes to Sthiramati.[5] Besides, he undertook the revision and correction of the Tibetan works, such as Sadanga-yoga, Lakshaṇābhidhānodhrita-laghu-tantra-piṇḍārtha-vivamanāma, Śrī Buddhakapāla Mahā-tantra-rāja-tīkā-abhaya-padhatināma.[6] He is said to have flourished in the latter half of the fifth century and the first half of the sixth century A.D.[7]

Besides the above mentioned Paṇḍitas of Nālandā, the name of Dharmapāla is famous. We have somewhat definite information about his date. He was a native of South India and belonged to a minister's family. He left his home in search of truth and at last came to Nālandā, and got himself ordained to the Buddhist monastery and acquired great distinction and subsequently he became the Head of the University.[8] He must have retired from Nālandā before 635 A.D. because when Hiuen-Tsiang visited it, he found that Śīlabhadra had succeeded him. This implied that Dharmapāla was then dead or had retired by that time. He is said to be a contemporary of the great Bhartrihari and wrote the Śloka portion of the Vedāvritti in collaboration with him.[9] He wrote treatises on Etymology, Logic and Metaphysics of Buddhism.[10] The following other books[11]—Ālambana-pratyaya-dhyāna-śāstra-vyākhyā, Vidyāmātra-siddhi-śāstra-vyākhyā, Śata-śāstra-vaipulya-vyākhyā, Valitattva saṁgraha—are also ascribed to him.

Śīlabhadra, who succeeded Dharmapāla as the Paṇḍita of the University, was equally famous among the Nālandā Paṇḍitas. We have reliable account about him from Hiuen-Tsiang's records. (Hiuen-Tsiang himself was a student of Śīlabhadra and studied Philosophy under him in about 635 A.D.).[12]

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[1] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 105.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] Watters, ii, p. 165.
[4] Beal, ii, p. 171.
[5] Watters, i, p. 327.
[6] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 107.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 106.
[8] Watters, ii, pp. 226, 168, 69.
[9] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, Intro., p. lvii.
[10] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 108.
[11] Bose, *Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities*, pp. 115-16.
[12] Beal, *Records*, ii, p. 110.

Like his predecessor Śīlabhadra too, was from outside the State of Bihar and was perhaps from Samatata,[1] and a Brāhmaṇa by caste. At Nālandā he was initiated into the principles of Buddhism by Dharmapāla. In his youth he is said to have defeated Śāstrātha, a heretic of South India, who had dared to raise his head against Dharmapāla. As a reward for this most wonderful victory, the king (of Magadha) granted him the revenues of a village in spite of the persistent refusal of Śīlabhadra. But Śīlabhadra, a true Bhikshu, instead of keeping the revenues for his own personal use, built a vast and magnificent monastery.[2] He was a great logician and master of Śāstra, but unfortunately only one of his works is available, namely, Ārya-Buddhabhūmi-vyākhyāna, which is preserved in Tibet.[3] As to his date, we are informed that when Hiuen-Tsiang came to Nālandā he was the abbot of the monastery and had become pretty old at that time (may be about 60 years old). Thus he may have flourished in the later part of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century A.D.

The name of Dharmakīrti[4] is famous in the realm of Buddhist philosophy. He was the son of a Brāhmaṇa from South India. From his very childhood, he had acquired great skill in the fine arts, Vedas and Vedāṅga, grammar and in all the theories of the Tīrthas. In course of time he joined Buddhist Saṁgha as a consequence of which he was later on made an outcast. Thereupon, he came to Madhyadeśa[5] (Magadha) and was received into the Nālandā monastery by Āchārya Dharmapāla. He attained great learning in the three Piṭakas and knew in all about 500 Sūtras and Dharaṇis by heart.[6] He is the author of numerous works on Logic and Yogāchāra philosophy, such as Pramāṇa-varttikā-kārikā, a commentary on the book Pramāṇa-samuchchaya of Dinnāga.[7] He wrote another sub-commentary on the Pramāṇa-varttikā-kārikā called Pramāṇa-varttikā-vritti.[8] Pramāṇa-vinischyaya quoted by Mādhavāchārya[9] is another work on logic by him. Besides these books, the following[10] are also attributed to him: Nyāya-bindu, Hetu-bindu-vivaraṇa, Tarkanyāya or Vāda-nyāya, Santānāntara-siddhi, Sambandha-parīkshā and Sambandha-parīkshā-vritti, a commentary on the above by himself. As for the time of Dharmakīrti, scholars think that he did not live before Hiuen-Tsiang as his name is absent in his accounts. Vidyabhusana[11] thinks that he must have been a young contemporary of Hiuen-Tsiang since his name is not mentioned by the latter. I-Tsing[12] who was at Nālandā in 675-85 A.D. praises the scholarship of

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 109.
[2] *ibid.*, p. 110.
[3] Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, p. 111.
[4] Vidyabhusana, *Mediæval School of Indian Logic*, p. 103.
[5] J.R.A.S., 1904, In Tibetan Lit. Madhyadeśa signifies Magadha.
[6] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 103.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 107.
[8] *ibid.*
[9] *ibid.*
[10] *ibid.*, pp. 109-18.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 106.
[12] Takakusu, *I-Tsing*, pp. lviii, 181.

Dharmakīrti who was dead long before. Thus Vidyabhusana[1] fixes 635-50 A.D. as the time of Dharmakīrti. But Sankrityāyana is of opinion that 625 A.D. would be the latest date for Dharmakīrti.[2]

Tāranātha mentions the names of some other writers like Devendrabodhi, Śākyabodhi, Vinītadeva, etc. who also contributed to Buddhist philosophy of Yogāchāra. Their details are obscure. They might have been attributed to the Nālandā University, where in the company of renowned scholars of the University they must have aspired to contribute to Buddhist literature. According to Vidyabhusana all these writers flourished in between 650 to 700 A.D.[3] On Dharmakīrti's advice Devendrabodhi wrote a commentary known as Pramāṇa-vārttikā-pañjikā[4] on Dharmakīrti's Pramāṇa-varttikā. Therefore, he must be the contemporary of Dharmakīrti. Śākyabodhi is stated to have been a pupil of Devendrabodhi and Pramāṇa-vārttikā-ṭīkā is attributed to him.[5] Vinītadeva is said to be the author of the following books on logic : Nyāya-bindu-ṭīkā, Hetu-bindu-ṭīkā, Vādanyāya-vyākhyā, Sambandha-parīkshā-ṭīkā, Ālambana-parīkshā-ṭīkā and Santānāntara-siddhi-ṭīkā.[6]

Chandragomin,[7] another Buddhist monk and a native of Varendra, wrote his commentary on Pāṇini's Grammar known as Chandra-vyākaraṇa.[8] According to Tāranātha[9] he composed a large number of hymns and learned works. He composed some Tāntric Vajrayāna-sādhana and some Sanskrit Stotras on Tārā and Manjuśrī. Of his poetical works we have only religious poems called the Śiśya-lekha-dharma-kāvya.[10] Nyāya-siddhyāloka[11] is also attributed to him. His drama Lokānanda has come down to us only in the Tibetan version.[12] According to Vidyabhusana[13] he lived in 700 A.D. But Leibich, who has recovered and edited Chandra-vyākaraṇa and its Vritti, places him between 465 and 544 A.D. On the ground that the Chandra-vyākaraṇa is earlier than the Kāśikā of Jayāditya and Vāmana, Chandra-gomin the grammarian is very likely Chandragomin who is associated with Nālandā where he met Chandrakīrti and became a pupil of Sthiramati.

After Chandragomin, Śāntideva is regarded as the most prominent writer of Nālandā. According to Tāranātha,[14] he was born in Saurashtra and was a king's son. Bendall has also agreed with this view.[15] It is uncertain as to

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[1] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 105.
[2] J.B.O.R.S., xxi-xxii, Appendix, p. viii.
[3] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, pp. 110-20.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 118.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 119.
[6] *ibid.*, pp. 120-21.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 121.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 122.
[9] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, ii, p. 36.
[10] Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 11.
[11] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 123.
[12] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, ii, p. 365.
[13] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 123.
[14] I.A., xlii, pp. 48-52.
[15] Quoted from Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, pp. 10-11.

whether he is the same Śāntideva who was a Tāntric scholar and Siddha. There is a legend about the latter's life. It is said that the Tāntric Śāntideva renounced the throne at the instigation of the Goddess Tārā who blessed him with great magical power. He left his home and came to Mañju-vajra where he remained for twelve years with a Guru. After his completing the twelve years' course, the Guru advised him to go to Madhyadeśa and thus he came to Magadha. Here he was appointed as Rāut or Senāpatī of the king of Magadha and became famous by the name of Achaladeva. He showed some magical power to the king. He could not remain in his post for a long period and became a Bhikshu and lived at Nālandā monastery and then became a Siddha, known as Bhusukapā.[1] Bhattacharyya who identifies the two Śāntidevas as one on the basis of some of the lines of his songs, has tried to show that Śāntideva or Bhusuka was a Bengali. At one place he writes,[2] "In the Pag-sam-jon-zan, it is said that Śāntideva was a native of Saurashtra, but I am inclined to think that he belonged to Bengal. It is evident from his song, "Āji Bhusu Bangālī Bhailī." In this song the word 'Bangālī' is used in pure Tāntric form. This is also supported by Sastri[3] in the introduction of his book 'Bauddha Gāna O Dohā' where he writes, "Sahaja mate tīnti patha āchhe, Avadhūtī, Chāṅdālī, Dombī va Bangālī. Avadhūtī te dvaitajñāna thāke, Chāṅdālī te dvaitajñāna achhe valileu haya, kintu Dombīte kevala Advaita....." Thus it is quite clear that he was not a Bengali if the view of Bhattacharyya is based only on the interpretation of words. Even the mere interpretation of Bhusuka's own words "Āji Bhusuka Bangālī Bhailī" clearly indicate that formerly he was not a Bengali, as even today the word 'Bhailī' is commonly used in Bihar. Sankrityāyana[4] is of the opinion that Bhusuka was born near Nālandā in a Kshatriya family and after becoming Bhikshu he came to Nālandā. He was known as Śāntideva. But according to the Bstan-hggur, Śāntideva belonged to Zahor,[5] whose identity is uncertain. Some take Zahor to be Jessore in Bengal or Lahore in the Punjab, while another view is that it is Sabhara in Dacca district. But there is no difficulty in identifying it with Sabour in Bhagalpur district as proposed by Rahula Sankrityāyana. So Śāntideva would belong to eastern Magadha (Bhagalpur district). He was a contemporary of king Devapāla.[6] According to Bendall[7] he flourished in the latter half of the eighth century A.D. But this date has been shifted back by some years, viz., between 695 to 743 A.D., because Śāntirakshita in his Tattvasiddhi quotes a full verse from the Bodhicharyāvatara of Śāntideva. Since the former lived in the major part of the eighth century A.D. and since the latter is not spoken of by I-Tsing, Bhattacharyya has assigned the date 695 to 743

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[1] Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 10.
[2] J.B.O.R.S., xiv, p. 355.
[3] Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 12.
[4] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 176.
[5] Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, vol. i, p. 331.
[6] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 176.
[7] I.A., xlii, p. 52.

A.D. to Śāntideva.[1] He is said to have composed three works namely Sūtra-samuchchaya, Śikshā-samuchchaya and Bodhicharyāvatāra.[2] He is regarded as a writer of Mahāyāna philosophy and wrote a book on Buddhist Tāntricism known as Śrī-Guhya-samāja-mahāyoga-tantrāvalividhi.[3] Besides the Sanskrit works on philosophy and Tāntricism, he wrote a book, in early vernacular, known as Sahajagiti which is available in Tanjur.[4] There is another book assigned to him and it is a commentary on Chakrasaṁvaratantra.[5]

After Śāntideva the name of Śāntarakshita is mentioned with high regard in the realm of Buddhist literature. Of his life we know very little. The most important phase of his life is his visit to Tibet. While he was a Paṇḍita in Nālandā he wrote a large volume of philosophical works known as Tattvasaṁgraha[6] in which, from the standpoint of the Svatantrikā Yogāchāra school, he has criticised numerous other philosophical systems of his day, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. The Mādhyamakālaṅkāra-kārikā,[7] with the author's own commentary, is a shorter work of Śāntarakshita. The work has come down to us only in the Tibetan tradition. The other book Vādanyāya-vritti-vipañchitārtha,[8] an elaborate commentary on the Vādanyāya of Dharmakīrti is also assigned to him. He is further said to have written Tattvasaṁgraha-kārikā.[9] His age is assigned to the early eighth century A.D. as in the year 749 A.D. he is said to have constructed in Tibet a monastery named as Bsām-ye[10] on the model of Oddaṇṭapurī Vihāra in Magadha. On the basis of Tibetan authority, Vidyabhusana and Waddell have said that Śāntarakshita was born in the royal family of Za-hor, a name which they failed to identify correctly. But Bhattacharyya has identified it with a small village of Sābhāra in the Pargānā of Vikramapur (Dacca district).[11] Thus according to Bhattacharyya, Śāntarakshita hailed from East Bengal. However, his identity of the place does not seem to be very plausible. Sankrityāyana[12] on the basis of the same Tibetan authority has identified the place with modern Sabour in Bhagalpur district of Bihar. In view of these different interpretations of the identity of the place, it is not possible to be definite as to which identification is correct.

Śāntarakshita's pupil, Kamalaśila, who succeeded him in Tibet was formerly a professor of Tantra at the Nālandā University, and has also contributed

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[1] *Tattvasaṁgraha*, vol. i, (G.O.S. xxx), Foreword, p. xxiii.
[2] I.A., xlii, p. 49; Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, ii, p. 366.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 51.
[4] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 176.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] See *Tattvasaṁgraha* of Śāntarakshita with the commentary of Kamalaśila edited by Krishnamacharya in G.O.S. Nos. xxx and xxxi.
[7] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, vol. ii, p. 375.
[8] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 125.
[9] *ibid.*
[10] *ibid.*, pp. 124-25.
[11] G.O.S. No. xxx, pp. xii-xiii.
[12] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, pp. 369-372.

to the Buddhist literature. Books that are assigned to him are Nyāyabindu-pūrva-paksha-saṁkshipta, a summary of criticism on the Nyāyabindu of Dharmakīrti and Tattva-saṁgraha-pañjikā, a commentary on the Tattva-saṁgraha of Śāntarakshita.[1] Being a disciple and contemporary of Śāntarakshita, Kamalaśila must have lived between 720 and 780 A.D.

Besides the above mentioned scholars of Nālandā we know the name of Vīradeva.[2] But we are quite in the dark about his contribution to literature. He was a resident of Nagarahāra (Jalalabad) and was appointed the Head of Nālandā by king Devapāla. He was well-versed in all the Vedas and the Śāstras[3] and was highly revered by the king. As he was a contemporary of Devapāla, he may be placed in the middle of the ninth century A.D.

In addition to the scholars from Nālandā, we have some information about others from the Vikramaśilā University: Jñānapada, Vairochana, Jetāri, Ratnavajra, Ratnākaraśānti and Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna are some of the most important among them for their contribution to Buddhist literature in the ninth to the tenth century A.D.

Āchārya Jñānapada was a pupil of Simhabhadra and later on became the royal priest of king Dharmapāla. The king later on appointed him as the Āchārya for ordination at Vikramaśilā. There he developed his study of Mantravajrāchārya and became the founder of a new cult of which Vikramaśilā was the only centre in those days. About nine of his works on Tantra which were originally in Sanskrit have been lost, although their Tibetan versions are preserved in Tibet.[4]

Vairochana[5] was a pupil of Padmasambhava of Nālandā, on whose departure to Tibet he came to Vikramaśilā, where he wrote several works in Sanskrit, such as Bodhisattva-charyāvatāra-pañjikā, Ratna-vāda-chakra and the like and translated into Tibetan several Tāntric works.

Āchārya Jetāri[6] was a great writer of his period. King Mahīpāla (ca. 899-940 A.D.) conferred upon him the title of Paṇḍita on his completion of study at Vikramaśilā where he worked as a professor. Hetu-tattva-upadeśa, Dharmādharmi-vinīchaya and Bālāvatara-tarka are the books attributed to him.[7]

Ratnavajra,[8] a scion of Kashmiri Brāhmaṇa family, had received the royal diploma at the Vikramaśilā University by the end of the tenth century A.D. Later on he was appointed there as a Gate-keeper of the University. He wrote a book on Buddhist philosophy known as Yukti-prayoga.[9] Later while in Tibet he is said to have translated into Tibetan a large number of Buddhist works of which a few are Mahāyāna-sādhana, Śrī-heruka-sādhananāma,

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[1] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, pp. 129-130.
[2] I.A., xvii, p. 311.
[3] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 589.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] *ibid.*
[6] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 136.
[7] *ibid.*, pp. 136-37.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 139.
[9] *ibid.*

Śrīakshobhya-vajra-sādhana and other Tāntric works.[1]

Ratnākaraśānti[2] was ordained in the order of the Sravāstivāda school at Oddaṇṭapurī, and learnt the Sūtra and Tantra at Vikramaśilā from Jetāri. Here at this place he came in contact with Nāropā (20th Siddha), and became his pupil. After staying at Vikramaśilā for a few years, he left for Somapura Vihāra and from there he went to Malwa. After a tour of seven years in these places, he again came back to Vikramaśilā, where he received the invitation of the king of Ceylon. He went to Ceylon and remained there for six years as a preacher. After his return from Ceylon to Vikramaśilā, he was appointed there as a Gate-keeper at the request of King Caṇaka perhaps Nayapāla. Later on he became a Siddha known as Śāntipā.[3] He was an author on Chhanda (Prosody), of the work called Chhando-ratnākara.[4] About nine works of his on Buddhist philosophy are available in Tanjur,[5] of which Vijñapti-mātrasiddhi and Antara-vyāpti are the most important.[6] He also wrote a few poems in early vernacular, one of which is 'Sukha-dukha-devai-parityāgadrishṭi.'[7]

Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna was a prolific writer. About 200 original works as well as translations have been attributed to him. They are mostly Vajrayānist works known as Sādhana,[8] but Sūtra works are also listed in the Bstan-hygur under his name. Atiśa composed the Abhisamaya of the Guhyasamāja in which Jig-rtend baṅ-phyug (Lokeśvara) was the chief deity of the Maṇḍala of Guhyasamāja according to the system of Jñānapada.[9] In bSām-yas Vihāra Atiśa translated many works with the assistance of Nag-tsho such as the Mahāyāna-Saṁgraha-bhāshya. The Master also saw many manuscripts which were not available in India and stayed in the monastery for considerable time.[10] Atiśa composed the large and short Mādhyamakā-upadeśa and the Ratnakarondodghāṭa-nāma-Mādhyamakā-upadeśa.[11] The Mahāyāna Uttaratantra, composed by Aśanga was translated by Atiśa.[12]

Jñāna-Śrīmitra was another scholar of Vikramaśilā.[13] He was first admitted into the Śrāvaka school of Buddhism, but afterwards became a Mahāyānist. When Dīpaṅkaraśrī Jñāna went to Tibet, he was appointed by Caṇaka as a Gate-keeper of the University of Vikramaśilā. He wrote books on Buddhist logic known as Kārya-kāraṇa-bhava-siddhi, Tarka-bhāshā and Pramāṇa-vinischaya-ṭīkā.[14]

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[1] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 590.
[2] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 140.
[3] *ibid.*; Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 196.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 196.
[6] Vidyabhusana, *Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 140.
[7] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 196.
[8] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 591.
[9] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 251.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 257.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 259.
[12] *ibid.*
[13] Vidyabhusana, *Mediæval School of Indian Logic*, p. 137.
[14] *ibid.*, p. 138.

Besides the above mentioned scholars from Vikramaśilā, we possess a few more names of scholars, who carried the tradition of the Vikraṃaśilā monastery for a century after 1000 A.D. Among them the name of Abhayākaragupta is famous. He flourished during the reign of Rāmapāla. After his education, he became a monk and was appointed by the king as a priest to perform the religious ceremonies of the palace. Formerly he was a Paṇḍita of Bodh-Gayā and Nālandā, but later on became a high priest of the Vikramaśilā monastery. In the reign of Rāmapāla he composed his great work 'Munimatālaṅkāra.'[1] The Tibetan scholar Ma-lo-tsa-ba on coming to India had received instructions from him.[2] Abhayākaragupta also composed the vajrāvali, Vajrāvalināma-maṇḍalasādhana.

The discovery of some of the manuscripts of the Bauddha-Gāna-O-Dohā throws unexpected light on the state of Buddhist vernacular literature in Eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal. According to Sastri,[3] these Dohās consist of three kinds of works :—Chāryachāryavinischaya, Dohākosha and Dakārṇava.

As regards the language of these Dohās or songs, Bendall[4] once stated that 'they are in Apabhraṁśa language,' but later on he revised his opinion and called it Buddha-Prākrita-Bhāshā. This latter opinion could not satisfy him and he again changed his view and pointed out that the 'Dohās are in Śuddha-Prākrita.' In spite of the revised version of Bendall about the language of the Dohākosha, Sastri is not inclined to accept his opinion and has pointed out that the language of these Dohākoshas is early Bengali-vernacular. He has stressed that most of the writers of these Dohākoshas were from Bengal.[5] Chatterji has strongly asserted that the language is proto-Bengali, and not Magahī or Maithilī.[6] But Mishra[7] has tried to show the resemblance between the language of Dohākosha and old Maithilī literature on the basis of palæography, grammar and vocabulary. In the opinion of Bagchi, "Haraprasad Sastri failed to recognise its language (Language of the Buddhist Dohās) as Apabhraṁśa."[8] Recently in his book 'Purātattvanibandhāvalī', Sankrityāyana has pointed out that most of the Siddhas (the writers of the Dohākoshas) were from Bihar and have written their songs in early Magahī Hindī.[9] In another book 'Hindī Kāvyadhārā' Sankrityayana has tried to establish that these poems have nearest approach to early Hindī vernacular language. Jayaswal[10] has admitted this fact that the Chāryagītis (the songs of the Āchāryas or teachers) are old Maithilī specimen or Magahī Hindī. The question thus appears to

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[1] Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 593.
[2] *The Blue Annals*, I, p. 219.
[3] Sastri, Preface to *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 1.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 5.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 284.
[7] Mishra, *History of Maithili Literature*, vol. i, pp. 103-08.
[8] J.D.L., xxviii, Dohākosha with notes and translation.
[9] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 167.
[10] P.O.C., 7th Session, Presidential address, p. lxxiv.

be highly controversial and we do not feel competent enough to pass the final judgement on the problems of the language of the Dohās. It seems, in the beginning, the language of the people of Eastern Provinces (Bihar and Bengal) was the same. But in course of time distinct regional popular dialects developed. Such local languages were mostly used by common and low class people who had very little literary attainments. They were, therefore, not pure languages of the different localities and it is futile to regard them as particularly Magahī, Bangālī or Maithilī.

Traditionally the number of these Siddhas is eighty-four. Some of their biographical accounts are recorded in Tibetan works like Pag-San-Jon-Zan and Tāranātha's "History of Buddhism." The difficulty in assigning works to these Siddhas is that there were probably more than one person of the same name. Of the traditionally accepted eighty-four Siddhas about twenty-three lived during the reign of Dharmapāla, Devapāla and Mahipāla (between 750 and 1025 A.D.) of whose empire Bihar formed an important and integral part. The names of these Siddhas are as follows[1] :—Sarahapā, Śabarapā, Lūipā, Kaṇhapā, Bhusukapā or Śāntideva, Kukkuripā, Gundaripā, Āryadeva, Vināpā, Davikāpā, Dombipā, Mahidharapā, Kaṇkaṇpā, Jayanandi, Tadakapā, Tāntripā, Bhadepā, Gujaripā, Virupā, Chatilapā and Dhendhenpā. Most of these Siddhas were associated with Bihar and were attached to the Nālandā, Oddaṇṭapurī or Vikramaśilā monasteries.

Śāntideva or Bhusuka was a scholar of Nālandā and a native of Bihar as shown before. Āryadeva or Kaṇhapā was associated with Nālandā.[2] Virupā was born in Magadha. Śāntipā has been identified with Ratnākaraśānti of the Vikramaśilā monastery. Nāropā's family was domiciled in Magadha and was associated with the Nālandā, Vikramaśilā and Vajrāsana mónasteries. The Tibetan scholar who visited Magadha in 1232-34 A.D. refers to Nāropā's hermitage in Phulhari, north of Nālandā.

The teachers of different sects generally used to preach their religious gospels at important holy places where people used to assemble in large numbers to pay homage to their Gods and Goddesses. Bodh-Gayā, Nālandā, Vikramaśilā, Oddaṇṭapurī etc. were the important centres visited by the Buddhist worshippers. Thus it is probable that these Siddhas came to these places to preach the ways and means of easy salvation for which every individual strives. The cult that they preached was naturally termed 'Sahaja'—easy to understand and follow. It has been pointed out before that this way of propagation of their faiths, gave rise to the vast literature of this period. These Siddhas (most of them associated with Bihar) have made immense contribution to early vernacular literatures. As regards the subject-matter of their songs, Majumdar[3] writes, "The subject-matter of these old Bengali Chārya-padas is highly mystical, centring round the esoteric doctrines and erotic and Yogic theories and practices of the Sahajiya school of Buddhism."

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[1] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, pp. 167-198.

[2] Infra, p. 182.

[3] Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, vol. i, p. 384.

Among the Siddhas who were associated with Bihar, we may mention the following :—

Sarahapā :—He is known to us by many names like Sarojvajra, Padmavajra and Rāhulbhadra.[1] He was born in a Brāhmaṇa family at Rajñī in eastern part of the country.[2] After becoming a Siddha he remained at Nālandā for a long period. Śabarapā was his favourite disciple.[3] Sarahapā's thirty-two works on Vajrayāna are found translated in Tibetan manuscripts. Besides these, his following works[4] in early vernacular have also been found translated into Tibetan :—

(*a*) Kāyakosha-amrita-vajragīti,
(*b*) Chittakosha-aja-vajragīti,
(*c*) Ḍākinī-vajra-guhyagīti,
(*d*) Dohākosha-upadeśagīti,
(*e*) Dohākoshagīti,
(*f*) Tattvopadeśa-śikhara-dohākosha,
(*g*) Bhāvanā-dṛishti-charyāphala,
(*h*) Vasanta-tilaka-dohākosha,
(*i*) Charyāgīti-dohākosha,
(*j*) Mahāmudropadeśa-dohākosha,
(*k*) Dvadaśopadeśa-gāthā,
(*l*) Mahāmudropadeśa-vajra-Guhyagīti,
(*m*) Vāk-kosharuchirasvara-vajragīti,
(*n*) Sarahagītikā.

It is mentioned in the Blue Annals that the Buddhist saint r-Gya-gar-Phyag-na on coming to Tibet in the later half of the 11th century A.D. preached Sarahapā's Dohākosha to twenty-one great scholars and others in Tibet.[5]

Śabarapā :—He was a disciple of Sarahapā. He is also known as Śabarīśvara.[6] He was a Kshatriya and according to Sankrityāyana,[7] he hailed from Vikramaśilā. There are twenty-six small works of Śabarapā. Their translation into Tibetan are preserved in Tanjur.[8] He wrote some books in Sanskrit. Vajrayoginisādhanā is an important one.[9] Besides in Sanskrit, he composed the following songs[10] in early vernacular.

(*a*) Chittaguhyabhīrātha-gīti,
(*b*) Mahamudra-vajragīti,
(*c*) Śūnyatādrishṭi,
(*d*) Shadangayoga,
(*e*) Sahajaśamvarasvādhishthāna,
(*f*) Sahajopadeśa-svadhisthāna.

About the last three, it is not definite whether originally they were in Sanskrit or in early vernacular.[11] Sankrityāyana[12] further states that in the tenth century A.D. there was another Śabarapā who was the teacher of Maitripā. His works are also mixed with the works of former Śabarapā.

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[1] Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 26.
[2] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 167.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 168.
[4] *ibid.*, pp. 168-69.
[5] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 72.
[6] Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 29.
[7] Sankrityāyana, *Hindī Kāvyadhārā*, p. 20.
[8] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 171.
[9] Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 29.
[10] Sankrityāyana, *Puratattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 171.
[11] *ibid.*
[12] *ibid.*

Kaṇhapā or Āryadeva[1] :—He is not the same Āryadeva, who was the disciple of Āchārya Nāgārjuna, the founder of Śūnyavāda. The present Āryadeva is quite different from the former one. His teacher's name was also Nagarjuna who was a Vajrayānist and a pupil of Sarahapā.[2] After his ordination Āryadeva came to Nālandā. In Tanjur's collection, nine books on Philosophy and twenty-six on Tāntricism are preserved in the name of Āryadeva. Perhaps the nine works on Philosophy belong to early Āryadeva and the Tāntric works can be assigned to the later, out of which there is only one in early vernacular known as Nirvikalpa-prakaraṇa.[3] According to Sastri,[4] he was famous by the name of Kaneripā or Vairāginātha and thus Kanerigītikā also is attributed to him. He has been identified with Kaṇhapāda, the author of the 'Havejra-pañjikā-yogaratnamālā'[5] a manuscript of which dated in the 39th (past) reign of Govindapāla, has been found. Govindapāla was a king of Magadha whose reign ended in 1162 A.D. and so the manuscript is dated in 1201 A.D.

Lūipā :—Formerly he was an important officer in the court of Dharmapāla. One day he came in contact with Śabarapā and became his disciple. Darikapā and Dengipā (formerly they were the king and the minister of Orissa respectively) were among his favourite disciples.[6] On the authority of Tibetan sources he has been identified with Matsyendranātha and placed in Bengal.[7] He is credited with the introduction of Yoginī cult. He composed many songs in early vernacular, out of which the following[8] are preserved in Tibetan translation :

(*a*) Abhisamayavibhanga,
(*b*) Tattvasvabhāva-dohākosha,
(*c*) Buddhodaya,
(*d*) Bhagavadabhisamaya,
(*e*) Lūipāda-gītikā.

Bhūsukapā :—His another name is Śāntideva. He has been identified with Śāntideva, the famous scholar at Nālandā, whose scholarly works have been referred to earlier.[9]

Virūpā :—He was born at Triura in Magadha.[10] After his ordination he went to the Nālandā monastery for higher education and in course of time became a great Paṇḍita.[11] Among his pupils Dombipā and Kaṇhapā were

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[1] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 171.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *ibid.*, p. 173.
[4] Sastri, *Bauddha Gāna O Dohā*, p. 30.
[5] Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, i, p. 386.
[6] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 174. But some place him in the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th century A.D.; Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 341.
[7] Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, i, p. 343.
[8] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 174.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 175. Supra, p. 174.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 178. Triura (Tiur) is a village in Bihar Sub-Division of the Patna District. Some scholars take it to be tripura and identify it with Tipperah in Bengal. See Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i, p. 345.
[11] *ibid.*

famous. Avadhūtīpā, a native of east Bengal was his another pupil.[1] In Tanjur collections, there are eighteen works of Virūpā. They are on Tāntricism. Among them the following[2] are in early vernacular.

(*a*) Amritasiddhi,
(*b*) Dohākosha,
(*c*) Dohākosha-gītikarma-chaṇḍālikā,
(*d*) Mārgaphalāvintāvavādaka,
(*e*) Virūpagītikā,
(*f*) Virūpavajragītikā,
(*g*) Virūpapadachaturśīti,
(*h*) Sunishprapanchatattvopadeśa.

Dombipā :—He was born in a Kshatriya family of Magadha. Vīnāpā and Virūpā were both his Gurus. Kaṇhapā was his disciple. In Tanjur collection, twenty-one works of Dombipā have been preserved. As there was another Dombipā,[3] it becomes difficult to determine as to whom these works belong. The following[4] songs are in early vernacular: (a) Akshara-dvikopadeśa, (b) Dombi-gītikā and (c) Nadīvindudvāra-yogāchārya.

Mahipā :—He was born in a Śūdra family of Magadha.[5] He became a disciple of Kaṇhapā. There is only one work in Tanjur collection assigned to him which is in early vernacular, known as Vāyutattva-dohāgītikā. In Chāryagīti, there is a song assigned to Mahidharapā. Perhaps Mahipā and Mahidharapā are one and the same person.[6]

Kaṇkaṇapā :—He was born at Vishṇunagara (Magadha) in a royal family. In Tanjur collection only one work named Chārya-dohākosha-gītikā is assigned to him, and a few songs in Chāryagīti.

Tilopā :—He was born at Bhagunagara (Magadha).[7] His another name was Prajñābhadra. Nāropā, the great Paṇḍita of Vikramaśilā, was his disciple.[8] In Tanjur collection eleven works are assigned to him. Among them the following[9] are in early vernacular: (a) Antarbāhyavishaya-nivritti-bhāvanā karma, (b) Karuṇābhāvanādhishtāna, (c) Dohākosha and (d) Mahāmudrāpadeśa.

Nāropā :—His father was a Kashmiri Brāhmaṇa who lived in Magadha.[10] Here at Magadha Nāropā's birth took place. After his ordination, he was admitted to the Nālandā monastery for higher education. He became a great Paṇḍita and later on he was appointed as the door-keeper of the Northern-gate[11] of the Vikramaśilā University. He also acted as high priest of Vajrāsana.[12] Āchārya Śāntipā heard Tantra from him.[13] But his thirst for knowledge was

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[1] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 390.
[2] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 178.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 181.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *ibid.*, p. 192.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 193.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 194. According to another tradition he was a Brahmaṇa of Taligaon (Chittagong ?), vide, Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, i, p. 346.
[9] *ibid.*
[10] *ibid.*, p. 195.
[11] Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, vol. i, p. 346.
[12] *ibid.*
[13] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 380.

not satiated, and he went to Tilopā for further instruction under him. Nāropā is also famous by the name Narapaṇḍita. There are twenty-three works of Nāropā preserved in Tanjur out of which Nādapaṇḍita-gītikā and Vajragīti are in early vernacular.[1] Tantric precepts of Nāropā were held in great esteem by the disciples of the Tibetan Paṇḍita Brog-mi.[2]

Śāntipā :—He has been identified with Ratnākaraśānti who was a Paṇḍita of Vikramaśilā.[3] Śāntipā was one of the Dvāra-paṇḍitas of Vikramaśilā. His disciple was the Nepalese Paṇḍita Śāntibhadra who taught Sanskrit language to two Tibetan scholars who spent one year in Nepal.[4]

The task of refuting Buddhist philosophical theories of Śūnyavāda was taken up most enthusiastically by the Hindu philosophers of Mithilā and in turn this stimulated the progress of Buddhist philosophical treatise in Nālandā and Vikramaśilā still further. Thus the period saw a unique growth of voluminous Philosophical literature, both Hindu and Buddhist, in the State of Bihar.

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[1] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 195.
[2] *The Blue Annals*, i, p. 209.
[3] Sankrityāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 196.
[4] *The Blue Annals*, i, pp. 205-206.

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Illustrations

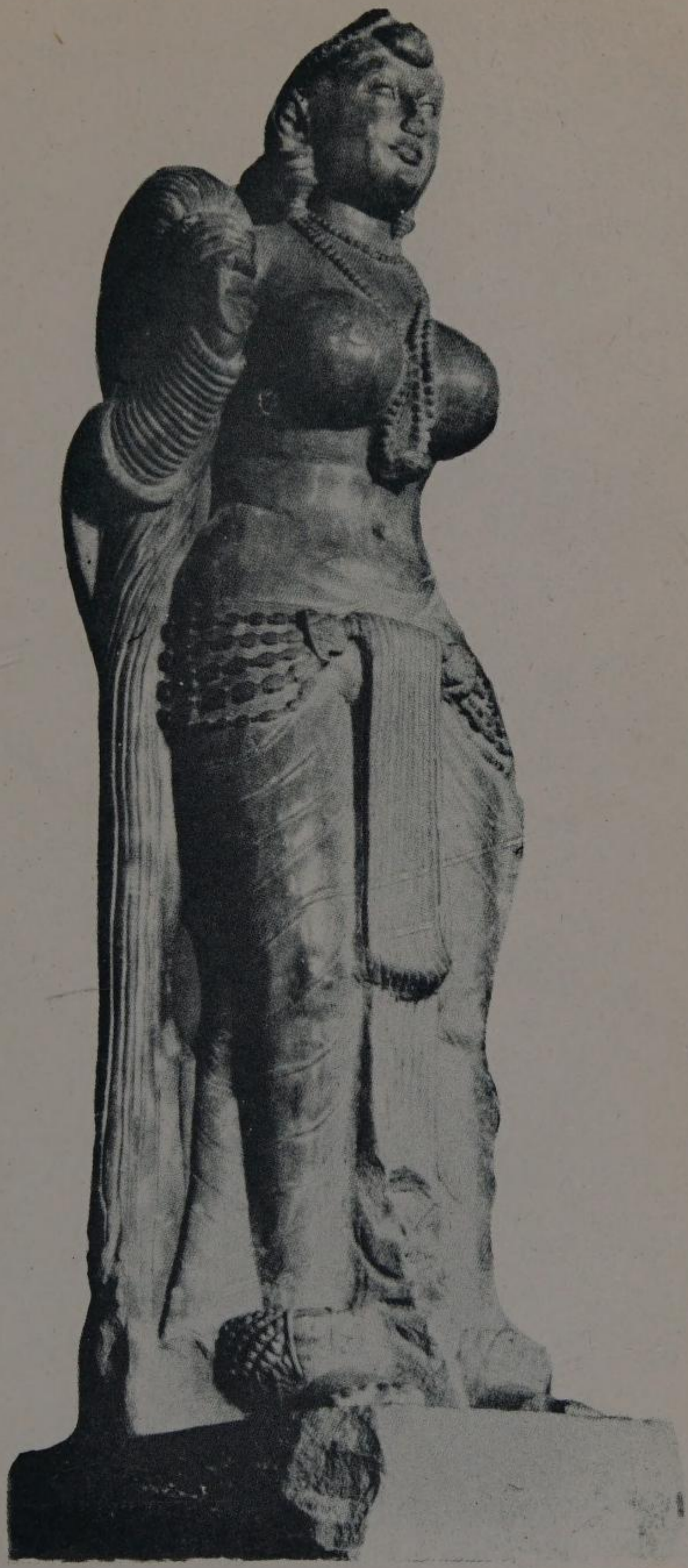
NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Didarganj Yakshi. Stone. *From Patna*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
2. Karttikeya. Stone. *From Shahabad*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
3. Surya. Stone. *From Monghyr*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
4. Agni. Stone. *From Monghyr*; now Patna Museum, Patna.

5. to 10. Panels in the niches of a ruined temple at Nalanda. Stone.

11. to 16. Buddhist details in the niches of the main stupa at Nalanda. Stucco.

17. Lokanatha. Gilded. *From Kurkihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
18. Tara. Bronze. *From Kurkihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
19. Tara. Bronze. *From Kurkihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
20. Bageshwara. Bronze. *From Kurkihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
21. Singhanada Avalokiteshvara. Bronze. *From Kurkihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
22. Buddha with Brahma and Indra. Bronze. *From Kurkihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
23. Uma-Maheshwara. Bronze. *From Monghyr*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
24. Varaha. Bronze. *From Rajgriha*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
25. Vishnu. Stone. *From Saran Dist.*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
26. Tara. Stone. *From Bihar*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
27. Avalokiteshvara. Stone. *From Vishnupur*; now Patna Museum, Patna.
28. Bhrikuti. Stone. From Baragaon, near Nalanda, preserved in a Surya Temple.
29. Bhrikuti. Stone. From Nalanda.
30. Vajrasharada. Stone. From Nalanda.
31. Sitting Buddha in Bhumisparsha-mudra. Stone. From Nalanda.
32. Standing Buddha in Abhaya-mudra. Stone. From Bodh-gaya
33. Nagarjuna. Stone. From Nalanda.
34. Khasarpana Lokeshwara. Stone. From Nalanda.
35. Marichi. Stone. From Kumrahar.
36. Aparajita. Stone. From Nalanda.



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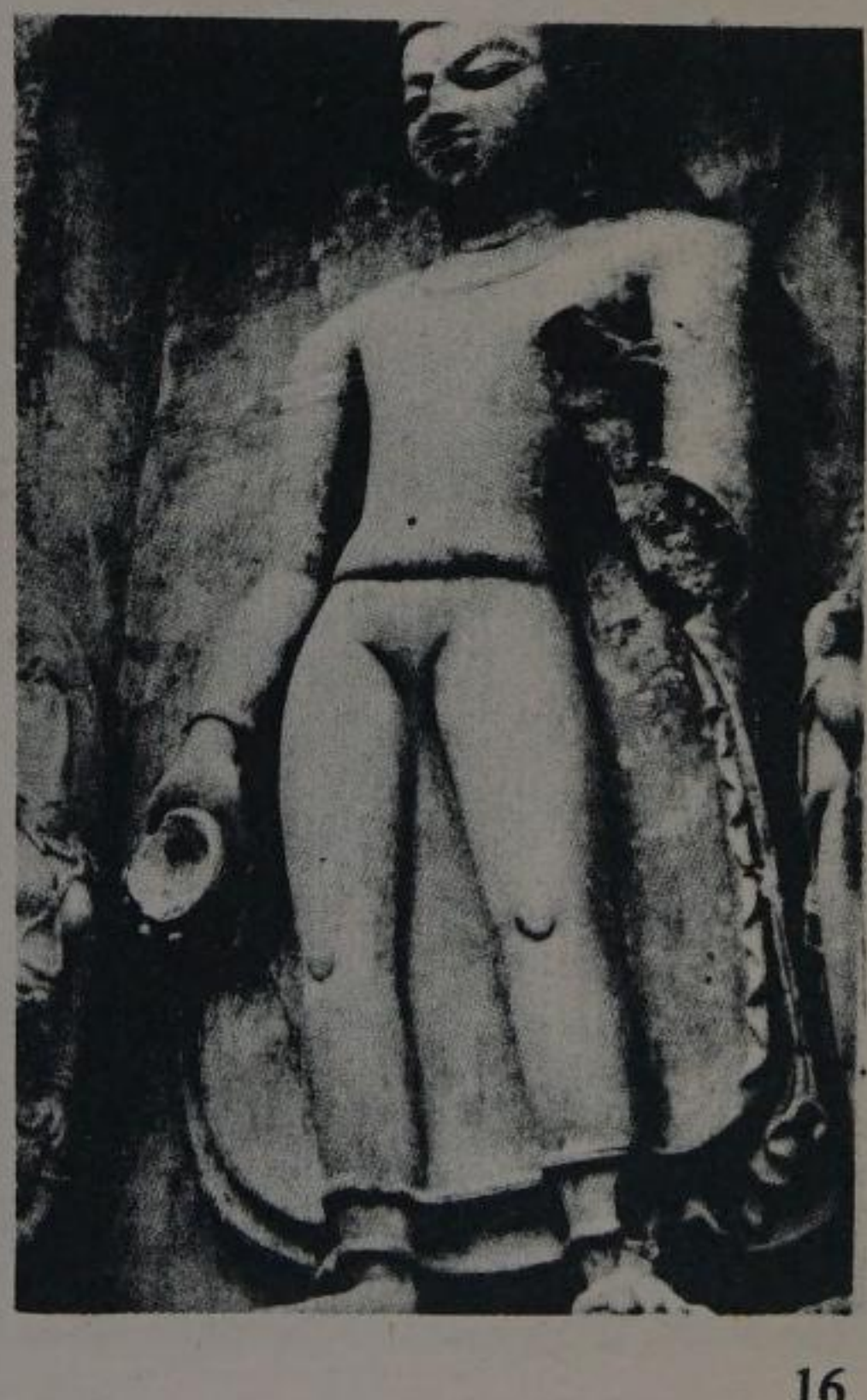

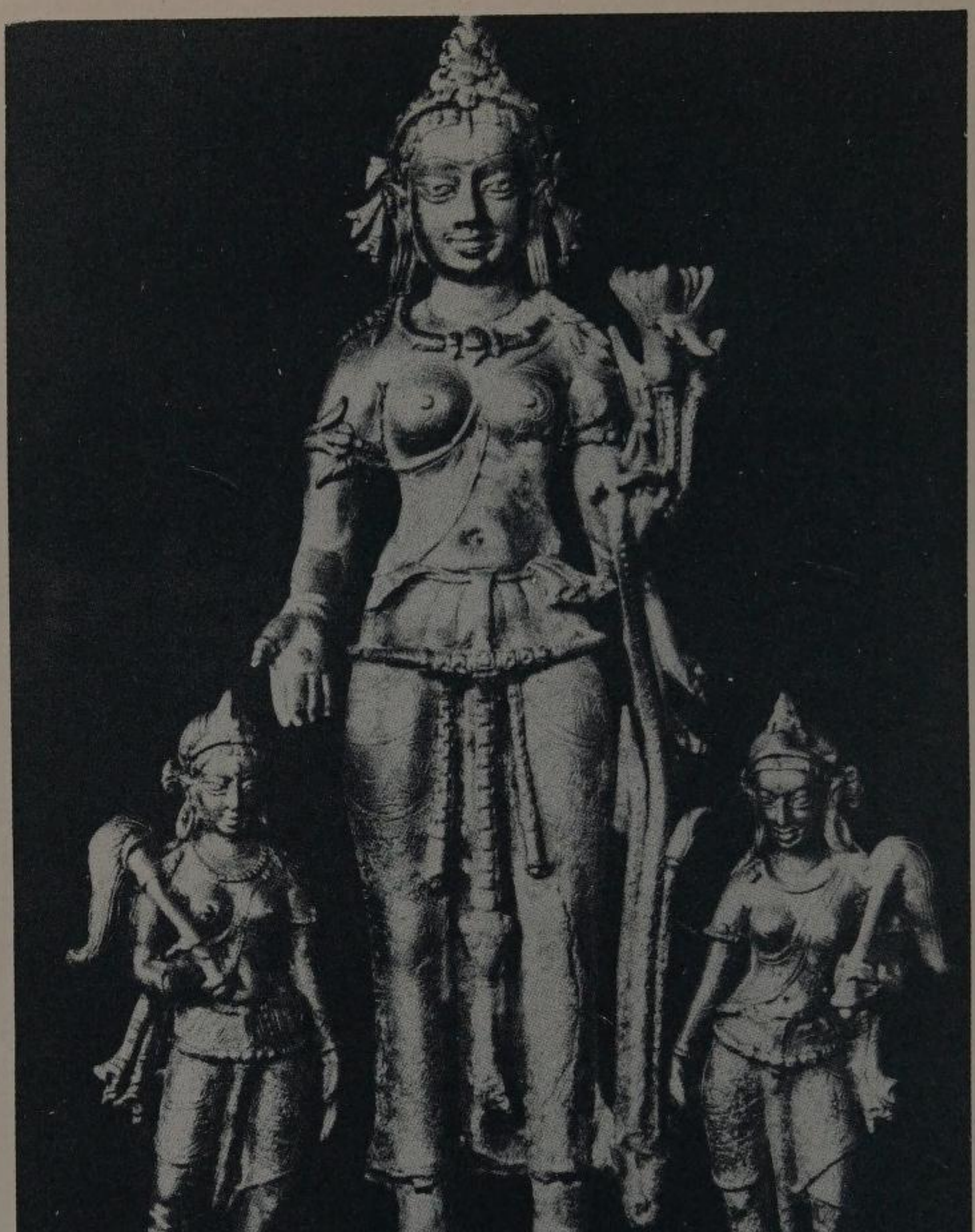

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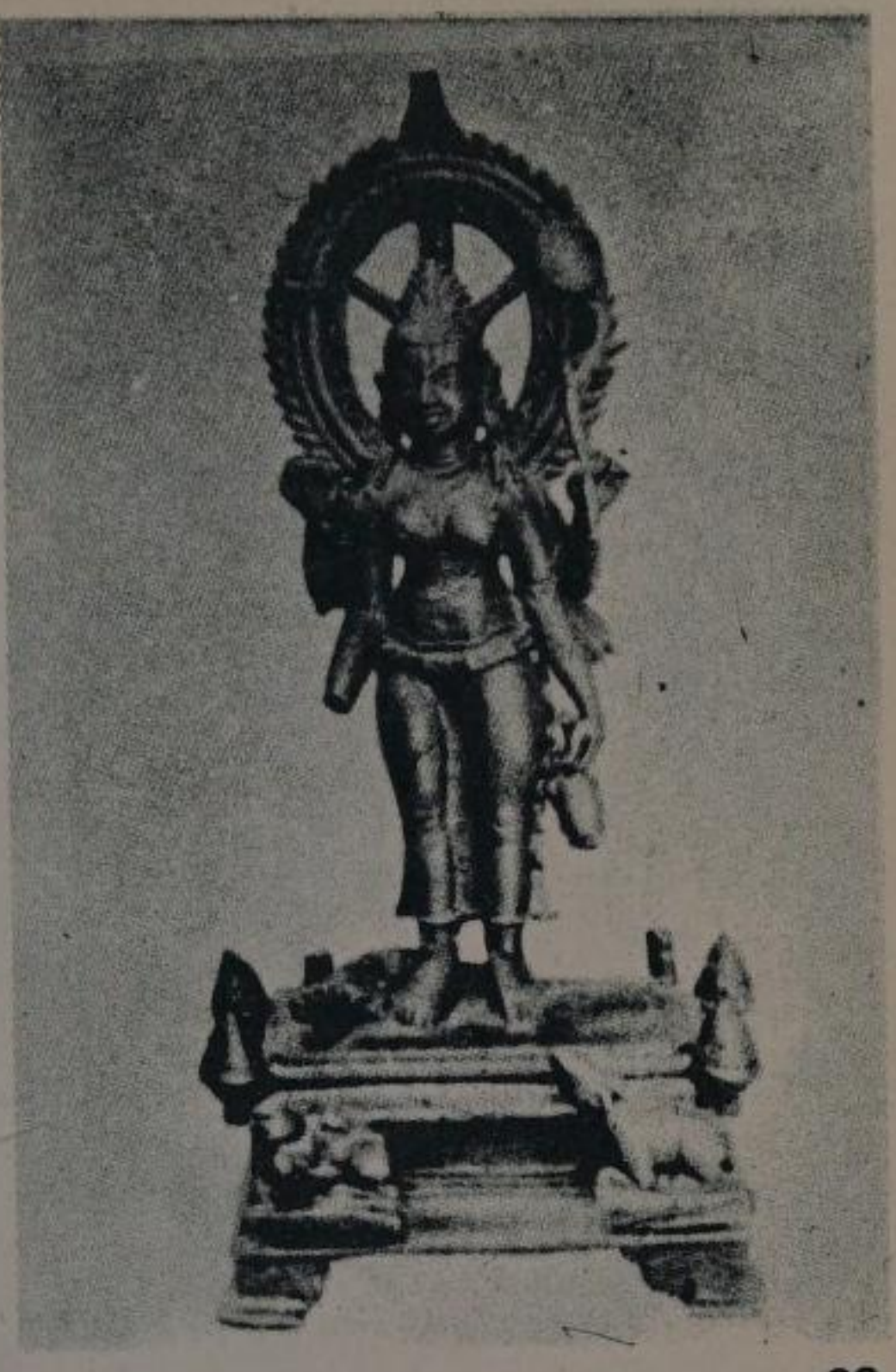

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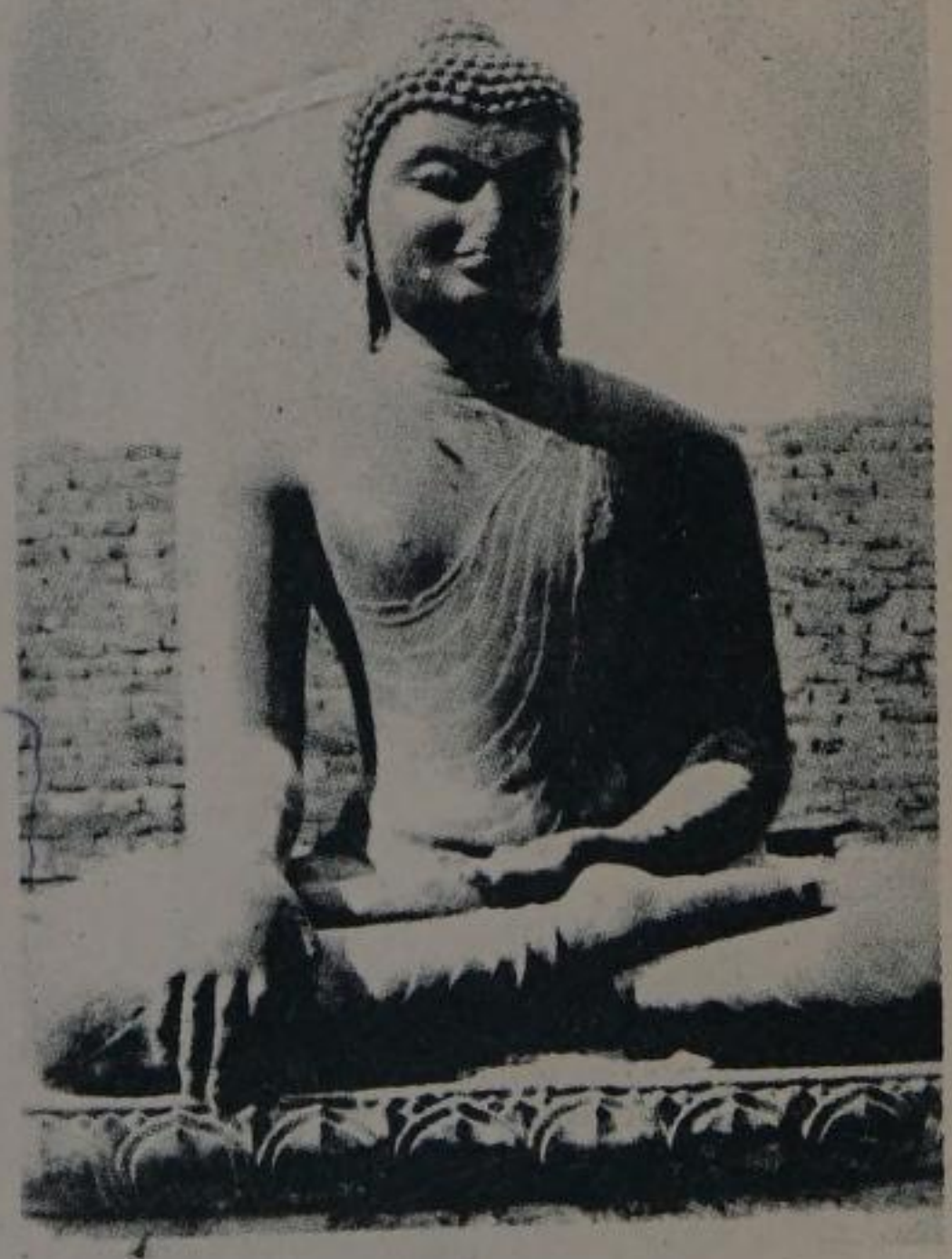

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